

GROUNDWORK OF ETHICS

very good book especially for

BY

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PREFACE.

THIS book attempts to apply to moral experience the general procedure by which experience of the material world has been explained and systematized by the physical sciences. It seeks by frank acceptance and impartial analysis of all the pertinent facts to reach a theory which, by showing their relations to one another, yields an intellectual systematization of moral experience. Thus its method is broadly that expounded in modern logic.

No attempt is made to examine in detail the practice of morality. To plunge into such considerations would be to risk losing sight of the wood in examination of the trees. Application to practice follows apprehension of the principles which analysis of the typical facts of the moral consciousness shows to be inherent in the good life. The theory of ethics and the practice of morality are broadly related as premises and conclusion, and the truth of the former is tested by its success in explaining and harmonizing the latter. The appeal is to the personal experience of each reader.

Only fundamental problems are dealt with, in the conviction that a clear understanding of them is serviceable to all who realize that life itself is a work to be well or ill accomplished, and, like all the minor undertakings with which it is filled, one which demands clearness of aim and insight into conditions. At the same time consideration of fundamentals is the best preparation for more detailed study of ethical doctrines. So the book is addressed to the general

reader who takes an intelligent interest in his own life, whether or not he proposes to carry further his study of moral philosophy.

In accordance with this view, the treatment is constructive and positive. The reader is not confused by detailed criticisms of other ethical systems, which are examined only so far as they touch the primary questions with which this book is concerned. Even such limited critical discussions—as those of hedonism, naturalism, and intuitionism—may be passed over lightly, or even omitted altogether, on a first reading. Their force will be appreciated better when the whole of the positive doctrine is apprehended.

No attempt has been made to produce an original theory. In the primary questions of ethics on which we are here engaged, the new is little likely to be the true. It is in the form of presentation, rather than in the matter presented, that the writer of a new book on ethical principles must hope for justification. My obligations to my predecessors are innumerable, though it is not possible to specify in detail the debts which have accumulated during more than forty years. But, whatever the source from which ideas and suggestions were originally received, they owe the form in which they are here presented to the workings of my own mind.

In the hope that this form may prove helpful to others the book is offered to the public of thoughtful readers. If some among them are led to a study of more profound and important treatises, the labour spent on it will be well repaid.

J. W.

Hove,

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CHAPTER I.

MORAL EXPERIENCE.

1. **Conduct.**

No one can be indifferent to the success or failure of his life. But success or failure depends on a true estimation of what it is good to seek, and of the way in which that good may be secured. To these questions it is, indeed, possible to give little or no thought. Men may not look beyond that which demands their immediate attention, and may leave unconsidered the further question as to whether what engrosses them is worth the care lavished on it. This does not mean that they are indifferent as to whether life goes well or ill with them, but it does mean either that they accept uncritically the general attitude of those around them as to the relative values of the things of life, or that they assume, equally uncritically, that their own likings are a sufficient guide. But public opinion in matters of good and evil, right and wrong, is no more infallible than in science, in art, or in politics. Nor is it unanimous. And every-day experience shows that slavery to appetite leads to shipwreck of life. (So, directly we think of the matter, we see that it is well for all who live to try to understand the nature of life. It is to this inquiry we here address ourselves.)

Now, all life is activity. From the simple vital processes of the plant, through the increasingly varied doings of the animal world, activity appears in ever more complex forms, till it shows its highest manifestation in human conduct. With increasing complexity is shown evidence of increasing

consciousness. The higher the form of life the more certain are the indications that external action has an internal counterpart. The beaten dog not only makes movements, but shows by unmistakable signs that he feels the blows to be painful and that this feeling prompts the movements as means of escape. The signs are sure, because they are analogous to those we should ourselves make under similar conditions, and we know that then they would express pain and desire to escape. Only through our own experience can we enter into the consciousness of another, whether man or beast.

When we compare human and animal life we are at once faced with the enormous fact of human progress, to which nothing corresponding can be found in the animal world. The beaver builds its house and the birds their nests in the way dictated by race-tradition; man has advanced from the mud hut to the cathedral, the municipal palace, the private mansion. He uses race-tradition, not blindly but freely. If we ask what this means, the answer can be found only in the fact that man alone has power to plan an anticipated future—to see in imagination something new to be done, and to act on the determination to do it; and, in so acting, to make use of the products of past human activity.

This power of forming and accomplishing purposes gives man control of his actions. He does not respond blindly to the circumstances in which he finds himself, but makes his opportunities. He can bend his surroundings to his will instead of allowing himself to be passively moulded by them. So he uses as his agents such forces as steam and electricity, though on the condition that he works in harmony with them.

Man, then, is not merely aware of his actions, nor are these simply reactions to external forces, but he makes them the expression of his will. This is what is meant when human action is spoken of as *conduct*. Conduct is action guided by the man himself, for which he is responsible.

2. Development of Ethics.

(i) ORIGIN.—The central problem of human life is how it may most surely advance towards perfection; in other words, by what purposes conduct should be determined, what ends should be sought by human endeavour.

And this is a problem both for mankind as a whole and for each individual man. Doubtless, we all look but a little way ahead in most of our daily actions; we plan something definite to be done, and do it—or fail to do it—according to the amount of our steadfastness. Yet, these daily plannings and accomplishments are embedded, as it were, in a matrix of wider purpose, assumed rather than definitely thought out, which is the expression in our own souls of the common estimate of good and evil. It does not occur to the average decent man, even if in great straits, to plan a theft or a murder. Equally, it may not occur to him to sacrifice his own interests to those of another. The plans and purposes which actually count are, as a rule, those which reflect the views of the social group in which the individual lives, and with which he has more or less fully identified himself.

This largely passive acceptance of social opinion serves for the mass of people in the common every-day affairs of life. But in crises the need is felt for something more enlightening, and philosophical minds have always attempted to find well-grounded principles which should rule conduct. Among the early records of all peoples are meditations on the meaning of life, and on how the most can be made of it. Such questions were asked by Hebrew prophets and writers on wisdom as well as by the sages of Chaldea, Persia, India, China, and Egypt; in short, wherever man began to emerge from barbarism. (In the fifth century before the Christian era the Athenian Socrates devoted his life to the clearing up of contemporary ideas on what was commonly approved and disapproved in human conduct. As his disciple Xenophon records, he spent his time “inquiring into what was pious,

what impious; what honourable, what base; what sobriety, what excess; what courage, what cowardice; what a state, what a statesman; what the government of men, what one who was capable of governing them. And so too on other subjects, the knowledge of which he thought rendered men honourable and good, but ignorance of them fit only to be designated as no better than slaves."¹

(ii) **CONTROVERSIES.**—From the teaching of Socrates were developed the later Greek theories of the ultimate principles of human life, which in turn came to be known as *Ethics* (*Tà ἠθικά*, from *ἦθος*, custom; in the plural, character). These differed primarily according to whether the bodily life of sensation or the spiritual life of thought was regarded as of fundamental importance, and these differences have marked speculation ever since. On this ultimate question Christianity necessarily threw its weight into the spiritual scale, and by its fuller expression of the relations between God and man gave a personal warmth of feeling to the moral life which had hitherto been lacking.

Nevertheless, ethical doctrine has never remained stationary. Christian moralists—as St. Ambrose of Milan in the fourth century—took up much of the practical teaching of the Stoics, based on the doctrine of the supremacy of spirit, and later on the *Ethics* of Aristotle (B.C. 384-322) furnished a mould in which the doctors of the mediaeval Church found it easy to express the principles of the Christian life.

At times the opposed Epicurean theory of pleasure as the highest good, based on the doctrine that bodily sensation is the foundation of all men know, think, and desire, found its advocates, and in the Italian Renaissance in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they were especially prominent. Since then, the doctrine has been urged in various forms, of which the most important for us, because it has had great and wide-

¹ *Memorabilia*, i.

spread influence in our own country, was the 'Utilitarianism' of Jeremy Bentham (1748—1832), especially in the modified form given it by John Stuart Mill (1806—1873), who, beginning as a strict disciple of Bentham gradually emancipated himself from some of the most characteristic features of the system.¹

The long historic past has, then, not been sufficiently long to lead men to agreement on that most important of theoretical questions: In what ultimately consists the excellence of human life? On the other hand, much practical agreement has been attained. Whatever the justification men advance for the conduct they esteem good, they show little divergence as to the general character of such conduct. People are commonly agreed that courage, temperance, veracity, and beneficence, are good, and that cowardice, lust, cruelty, theft, and lying, are bad. There is much greater concord as to the form of the good life than as to reason why it is good.

3. **Method of Ethics.**

This need not dishearten us. (The history of the physical sciences supplies many instances of similar disagreements, and though it is true that much greater unity has been reached in physical than in ethical science, yet the discovery of radium and the enunciation of Einstein's theory of relativity may profoundly modify accepted doctrines in physics. In the sciences which take human life as their subject-matter, as well as in those that deal with the material world, advance is made through conflict of theories.

It is true that in the physical sciences progress is manifest; in ethical science it is, at least, not so superficially obvious. Yet modern physical science is much younger than ethical science. It is, indeed, the product of the last four centuries, during which its sure and rapid advance has contrasted

¹ See pp. 85-96.

strikingly with the constant disputes as to fundamentals which have marked the realm of ethics. This progress has been due to the frank acceptance of that inductive method of inquiry which was first applied by Socrates to moral facts.

The essence of that method is that all true theory is based on analysis of facts, that all pertinent facts must be taken into account, and that a suggested theory which fails to fit all the facts to which it should be applicable must be rejected, or at least modified.

For many centuries men added little to their knowledge of nature and held many erroneous beliefs, not because there were no acute intellects in the world, but because it was too readily assumed that relations which seemed obvious to common sense were general laws of physics. The same tendency remained operative in the study of human life long after it was discredited in physical science. But preconceived theories are as much out of place in the one case as in the other. Ethical investigation can advance surely only on the condition that it sets out from a dispassionate and exhaustive examination of moral experience, that it rejects no fact on the ground of disagreement with a preconceived theory, and that it submits every doctrine to the test of verification by application to all the pertinent facts.

4. **Nature of Experience.**

(i) **FACTORS IN EXPERIENCE.**—It is, then, [from the facts of moral experience we must start, and it is to them we must return. But before considering those facts it is well to be clear as to what is meant by experience. For a usage of the word is not infrequent which practically limits its application to that which is experienced, and so tacitly excludes the self or person whose experience it is. But experience is only another name for actual life, with all that fills it and gives it value. It includes the life itself as well as its filling.

(ii) **SUBJECT OF EXPERIENCE.**—We are commonly more directly interested in the outer factor—the objects and events experienced, and so we are more definitely aware of them. Them we study, them we seek or avoid. But when we say ‘I observe, think, like, desire, so-and-so’ the ‘I’ refers to a reality as surely as does the ‘so-and-so.’ Further, the ‘observe,’ ‘think,’ ‘like,’ ‘desire,’ denote real activities of that subject in relating the object to itself. There can be no thoughts without both a thinker and an object thought, no desires which are not the desires of a subject for something. Even the simplest sensation can exist only as experienced by a subject. And subject and object come together to form experience only through an activity of the former which relates the latter to itself.

(iii) **OBJECTS OF EXPERIENCE.**—For each person the total object of experience is the whole world in which he lives. Nothing exists for any man of which he is not in some way conscious, and everything of which he is conscious is a fact in his experience. Everything of which we think, everything to which we feel attraction or aversion, everything we desire or strive to attain, is part of our experience. If I read the dialogues of Plato, the plays of Shakespeare, or the latest popular novels, they become part of my experience, as the present book will be part of the experience of each person who reads it. If an architect plans a house, a poet conceives a poem, an artist a picture, a musician a symphony, a thief a burglary, in each and every case the imagination of the as yet unaccomplished work is part of the experience of him who imagines it.

Such instances make it plain that experience is not limited to what the senses report of the external world. That, indeed, gives the material of physical science. But there are other forms of experience in many ways more important to us. The essential experience I have of the works of Plato or Shakespeare is not of the books as visible and tangible objects,

but of the thoughts expressed in them. "It is by those thoughts that my experience is enriched."

(iv). **RELATION.**—When we read the works of another, however, we are conscious not only of the thoughts of the author that are presented to us) and which we can no more alter than we can change the succession of physical events, (but also of thoughts and feelings of our own in reference to them. We may criticize, admire, condemn, be affected to laughter or to tears.

Similarly, (when we listen to a) symphony, or to a (vulgar song, the important part of the experience is the emotional tone aroused in ourselves, not the sounds as such, nor the instruments by which they are produced.) In music, indeed, reception of the product of another mind so merges what is given from without with our attitude toward it that the two factors are almost indistinguishable.

To some extent such merging marks all experience. Nobody who has not explicitly tried to do so realizes how hard it is to separate the ideas conveyed to him in a book from his own estimate of these ideas. That this is so, even when the former are accounts of events in the world of men and things, is evidenced by the conflicting relations, all based on the same contemporary records, given by historians of such series of events as the Reformation. Similarly, not the least difficult task of the investigator in physical science is to avoid reading his theories into his facts.

(v) **SUMMARY.**—There are, then, three elements in all experience—the object of which there is consciousness; the subject which is conscious of the object; and the relation between these two, which is some form of activity of the subject—understanding, appreciation, approval, condemnation, desire, aversion, and the like.

5. **Facts of Moral Experience.**

(i) **NATURE.**—Among the elements of experience are our

own judgements, impulses, desires, volitions, and affections. These are attitudes of the self towards the world in which it lives and acts. They are determinants of personal activity, both spiritual and bodily, and as such are facts of moral experience.) Not that moral experience is one part, or kind, of experience separable from the rest. Life is not moral in one compartment, and non-moral in all outside it. (All life so far as it is self-directed seeks some end in some definite way, and the moral quality of the agent is measured by the value of the end and the rightness of the way.)

(Such aspects of personal activity are the facts with which ethics deals. So, after we have considered the nature of the active subject, or person whose acts have moral quality, our task will be to analyse those facts in relation to the conduct of life.) But it may be well at starting to take a brief survey of the ground then to be traversed. We will, therefore, glance at the kind of facts we are later to consider more fully, and indicate broadly their bearing on the problem of living a good life.

(ii) FREEDOM.—At the foundation of all morality lies the fact that we can choose the ends we seek and plan means to attain them. Without this power we should have no responsibility for our lives. Our acts would be necessary reactions to the circumstances in which we are placed, and so would not be *ours* in any personal sense. We could not be conscious of wrong in ourselves, however clearly we might see that what we have done has been disastrous to others. So we could neither blame ourselves nor try to amend the character from which ill deeds proceed. We do not blame either pistol or shot for killing a man, though we have no hesitation in judging the man who fired the pistol. It is *his* act, because it proceeded from his will, not from any volition of pistol or shot. Without freedom there is no responsibility, and, therefore, no morality. It would be a mockery to show that one kind of life is better than another if a man be really an

automaton, even though he may be deluded by the belief that he determines his own conduct.

Nevertheless the fact of human liberty has been explained away, and it is certain that the freedom of which we are conscious is not unlimited. We shall, therefore, have to consider in what sense and within what limits consciousness testifies that each person is the arbiter of his own destiny.

(iii) **PURPOSE.**—We are conscious that we are free not only to act or to abstain from acting at any given moment, but also to form purposes as to the future. This, indeed, is the more important aspect of freedom, for the purposes adopted rule conduct during longer or shorter periods of time. A man's purposes show what he is, as well as determine what he does. In other words, purposes both express character and form character. For they are the inner directors of life, and life builds up character through the gathering together of purposes into a system.

Many actual purposes are trivial and disconnected. If a person has no others, the formation of character advances but a little way. Such an one abstains from the most important exercise of freedom, and largely leaves himself at the mercy of the successive sets of circumstances in which he finds himself. The possibility of uniting purposes into a system is, then, one of the most important facts of moral experience.

(iv) **VALUATION.**—The moral quality of life depends not only on the unifying of purpose, but on the kind of purpose which is dominant. Every purpose expresses a valuation of some end the agent seeks to attain; man strives for nothing which does not seem worth having. That we all value some forms of experience and some modes of action more than others is a constant fact of experience. In small matters and in great we constantly form estimates of relative value. These are the grounds of choice, and choice is followed by action directed towards the accomplishment of the purpose formed.

It is common experience that people estimate variously the value of the same kind of object. Some set their affections on one thing, others on quite different things. In small matters that may be morally indifferent. But the most important question of all is whether the main purpose of life is rooted in a right estimation of value. For experience, both of ourselves and of others, shows that in not a few cases conceptions of worth are mistaken. What in anticipation seemed good, in realization proves worthless or even evil. Such valuation was based on grounds either wholly mistaken, or inadequate as resulting from a too limited outlook.

Experience, then, shows the need for a standard of value by which all objects which determine purpose may be estimated. The character of life depends on ultimate purpose, and that is the expression of what is believed to have the highest value.

(v) **THE HIGHEST GOOD.**—This implies the conviction that there is an end which has supreme value for men and women simply as human beings, in that its realization means the fullest and most satisfying life. Such an end must be one that can be sought and found in many kinds of life, corresponding to capacity and circumstances; for the means by which it is to be attained must be relative to opportunity. The determination of the nature of this supreme good is the central problem of ethics, for it is the most fundamental question of the personal life.

(vi) **CONDUCT.**—This determination of the supreme end in the attainment of which human nature as such finds its fullest expression and satisfaction is indirectly a determination of the kind of conduct which should be pursued. All conduct is right which is directed to the attainment of that end, directly or indirectly, and all is wrong which leads away from it. This is the true ground of those judgements on conduct which we are all conscious of making.

(vii) **MORAL LAW.**—In experience this test of rightness

is applied indirectly through comparison with moral rules or laws. Such laws are universal facts of social life. In every community rules of conduct are recognized as binding on each individual. They express the judgements of the race evolved through countless generations; and obedience to them is enforced in various ways, ranging from tacit approval or disapproval to definite rewards and punishments.

In so far as an accepted rule is a true moral principle, it expresses the fact that the kind of conduct it enjoins, in normal circumstances makes for the realization of the highest good of mankind. This implies that moral laws have not been created by men, but discovered, as insight into the tendency of various modes of activity became clearer. It results that examination of the moral experience of mankind in the past shows a general advance in their character, analogous to that which has attended increasing insight into the processes of the material world.

(viii) **SIN.**—Though the consciousness of obligation to obey the moral law is a fact of experience, it is equally a fact that this obligation is not always fulfilled. That man can violate the law which he feels he ought to obey is a most striking evidence of his freedom. Man alone among living creatures can do despite to those laws of his own nature which indicate the way to its perfection.

The most general name for such violation is Sin. Of the reality of sin no question can be raised. Nor can it be doubted that only through conquest of sin can morality be realized in any life. So it is plain that the nature and effects of sin, and the possibility of its conquest, are moral facts of the greatest moment.

(ix) **CONSCIENCE.**—A fact of universal experience closely connected with violation of the moral law is that we either approve or condemn our own acts, both after they have been done and while they are as yet only contemplated.

There is no need to prove the possibility of such sitting in judgement on our deeds, for we are all aware of its actuality. It is the voice of conscience within us convicting us of sin and claiming to direct our lives, always insisting that we act wrongly whenever we do not do the best we can do. This fact, too, must be considered, and the validity of the claim to supremacy made by conscience examined.

(x) DUTY.—The existence of conscience shows that the moral law is not experienced as simply imposed by external authority. Men do not obey it because they are compelled, but because they feel that they *ought*, to do so. This sense of moral obligation is Duty, a fact of experience of which everybody is aware. It is, therefore, a fact which ethics must try to explain.

Further, the successive stages through which the sense of duty passes in the consciousness both of individual men and of mankind at large must be considered, and their relation to the whole life made clear. Briefly, the line of explanation must be that the *ought* is rooted in the relation of the rule to the attainment of the supreme good which is the true law of human nature.

(xi) VIRTUE.—Lastly, consideration must be given to what is meant by Virtue. That men are judged to be virtuous or vicious is a fact of constant experience, and, consequently, one of which ethics must take account.

That completes the examination of the typical facts of moral experience, and at the same time leads us back to the subject of that experience from which we set out. For the virtuous man is one whose personality is such that in his life morality finds the most perfect expression possible to him.

6. Ethics.

(i) EMPIRICAL.—All inquiry into the meaning and possibilities of life is ethical. In this sense, all thoughtful

people are students of ethics. Indeed, such consideration of ethical problems is implied by that 'moral thoughtfulness' which, on reflexion, everybody would acknowledge to be a duty. Doubtless it is empirical, but it presupposes underlying principles.

(ii) SCIENTIFIC.—(The investigation and systematization of these principles gives rise to the attempt to make ethics a science. Thus, scientific ethics does not enounce detailed rules for conduct, but lays bare the principles that give value to life. It may be called the Science of Ultimate Values; or, if attention be fixed on the living agent, (the Science of Character; or again, if action be emphasized, the Science of Conduct.)

It is well, however, to guard against the suggestion of abstractness in the word 'Science.' (Each particular science—mathematics, chemistry, logic, etc.—deals with one aspect or department of experience, as far as possible in isolation from all the rest. But ethics deals with experience in all its fullness, for on all experience a judgement of moral value may be passed.) This is better indicated by the usual eighteenth century name 'Moral Philosophy,' for it is the function of all philosophy to consider actual complete experience. But whether we speak of the Science of Ethics or of Moral Philosophy it must be borne in mind that its domain is the theoretical one of knowledge, though it is knowledge that can be applied in the practical sphere of action. But all detailed application is rather deduction from Ethics than Ethics itself.

CHAPTER II.

PERSONALITY.

1. **Nature of Personality.**

That each of us is a person is the presupposition of all experience. (We cannot define personality because we cannot get outside it) so as to study it as an object in experience, for our personality is our whole being. Nor can we exhaustively (describe it from observation of what goes on in our consciousness.) There are possibilities in all men which lie dormant and unsuspected till some crisis wakes them into activity, and none can tell all the future has in store for him. *Personality is the self in all its possibilities as well as in all its achievements.*

Life is the activity of personality in relating the world to the self. In each act of life, therefore, everyone is aware of his personality, though not all have reflected on it. But of this at least we are sure: we are persons who have lived definite lives in the past, who are in certain relations to men and things in the present,* who have certain intentions and anticipations as to the future. * So personality is not a fact which may exist unknown to us, as are many of the vital bodily processes of which we are unaware so long as they function healthily. We know we are persons, and we esteem all that happens in our experience as good or bad according to its effect on personal life.* As St. Augustine put it many centuries ago: "We both are, and know that we are, and delight in our being, and our knowledge of it."¹

¹ *De Civitate Dei*, xi. 28.

2. Spirit and Body.

(i) **BODY THE ORGAN OF SPIRIT.**—The concrete personality as we know it consists of a more or less organized spiritual life of feeling, thought, and will, united with a bodily organism, in certain relations to other persons and things. Into the metaphysical questions of the ultimate nature and relation of spirit and matter there is no need to enter. Ethics sets forth from the facts of experience, and in experience spirit and body appear as acting and reacting upon each other. Mind or spirit directs bodily movements, and is affected by bodily conditions.

This interaction of spirit and body implies the supremacy of spirit. For though spirit is affected by bodily conditions, the body cannot make use of spirit. But spirit does make use of body to carry out its purposes. The body is the instrument which the spirit uses in initiating and carrying out changes in its material surroundings which appeal to it as desirable. All art, all industry, all invention, bear witness to the use by spirit of body and of external matter in its own service.

Further, the spirit remains in the product of this activity. A statue, a picture, a poem, a piece of machinery, is a permanent material embodiment of the activity of the spirit of him who conceived and produced it, and through such embodiment the spirits of others can sympathize with and assimilate the ideas so expressed.

From this relation of spirit and body follows the important conclusion that morality is not a quality of the spiritual life alone, apart from the bodily life. It marks the whole personal life, and that is at once a spiritual and a bodily activity. Actions which injure bodily health and vigour are wrong because they render the body a less efficient instrument and expression of spiritual life. On the other hand, the general tone of the spiritual life stamps its impress on the body. Kindliness and nobility of thought, or, on the contrary,

peevishness and vulgarity of thought and feeling, mould the expression of eye and face. So the physical countenance increasingly becomes an index of the general tone of the spiritual life.

(ii) HUMAN FACULTIES.—In its direction of the great diversity of bodily activities called for to meet the needs of life, spirit works in a variety of ways. On the basis of a wide classification of these we distinguish capacities or faculties, not as separate and independent organs, but as aspects or forms of the activity of spirit dealing with various situations.

Individuals differ both in the innate strength of such capacities, and in the opportunities they find for their exercise and consequent development. One is by nature and cultivation a musician, another a poet, a third a mechanical inventor, and so on, though the great majority may show no marked predominance of any one faculty, but have some capacity in all, or most, of the typical lines of human endeavour. Probably these capacities have never been called into play sufficiently to develop them to their full possible strength. Such as they are, however, they together form the personality of each as it is known to his fellows. The complexity is too great to admit of complete analysis, even if full and accurate knowledge of another were possible. So it is that while we feel charmed by one personality and repelled by another, we are often unable to specify to what the attraction or the repulsion is due.

Some people impress themselves strongly on their fellows, it may be favourably, it may be unfavourably; others pass by and leave little or no trace of their passage. The former are said specially to possess personality, the latter to be wanting in it. But all that is meant is this power, or weakness, in impressing their fellow men. 'Personality' in this special sense is a quality of the total personality in the sense of being a person.

3. **Personal Identity.**

(i) **SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.**—The ultimate basis of personality is that each one of us persists throughout life as one identical self. We are conscious of this in memory, we assume it in anticipation. We can recall our own past, and, however much we may perceive ourselves to have changed in body and in spirit, we are directly aware that it is our own past. We have a wholly different attitude towards it from what we have towards other remembered things.

In other words, we distinguish between being conscious of external things and events, and self-consciousness, or awareness of the phases of our own experience *as ours*. It is this self-consciousness which makes it possible for us to direct our lives. We are conscious that we think, love, hate, desire, feel aversion, plan, resolve, repent, and so on, and we can examine and judge the value of those spiritual activities. But it is not simply as activities, but as *our* activities that we know them, and it is this reference to ourselves which marks them off from our apprehension of the thoughts and feelings of others, as clearly as from objects and events in the physical world. Toothache is the same kind of pain by whomsoever it is felt; but I know my own toothache directly, and it affects me quite otherwise than does the clearest recognition of the toothache of another. It colours my whole consciousness, and leads directly to some form of activity designed to relieve it. But the fullest sympathy with the sufferings of another does not give me a like pain, and leads only to the proffering of advice as to what that other should do.

(ii) **SELF-PERSISTENCE.**—Careful examination of our inner life shows that the phases or states of consciousness we there observe are not separate and independent. Conscious experience is not like a set of beads threaded on a string. Each phase enters into a continuous process of growth, and undergoes the constant moulding which marks all growth. Each is other than it would have been had the preceding phases

been other than they were. So the past lives in the present. My toothache of yesterday no longer exists as a spur to action; as a memory it does, and the actions to which it led took me into relations to things outside me which would not otherwise have been experienced. Every experience, no matter how unimportant, leaves the actual living self different in some way from what it found it. Spiritual life is a constant process in which there is not an unchanging self having experiences, but in which the self lives in its experiences, takes them into its life, and is enriched by them. Its past is prolonged into the present, and though we may not be able at will to recall some one specific element in that past, yet in suitable conditions it may be remembered, and in any case each experience has helped to determine the direction taken by the current of life, and has been absorbed into that current.

4. Character.

(i) ORIGIN.—We begin life with a bodily organism, and with certain spiritual tendencies and capacities. We have innate *Dispositions*—or emotional capacities and tendencies; and *Temperaments*—or tendencies to react in certain ways to the circumstances of life.

One person has naturally a gloomy, another a cheerful, disposition; one is predisposed to cruelty, another to kindness. Disposition primarily affects our relations to our fellows.

Again, the spiritual life of one runs strongest in intellectual channels, another is marked by firmness of will, another by emotional susceptibility. Various combinations of these result in slowness or quickness of response to calls from without, in persistence or vacillation in effort. And the combinations are indefinitely numerous, according to the absolute and relative degrees of strength of the constituents. The resultant whole is known as Temperament.

The body with its appetites and impulses, the disposition,

and the temperament, are, then, the raw material out of which the actual concrete personality of each of us is forged.

But it is forged by ourselves. The body has various appetites and these are of different strength, both separately and collectively, in different people. But it rests with us whether we shall follow or resist any bodily appetite; and advance in fullness and nobility of life depends on using bodily impulses in furtherance of spiritual ideas. We cannot annihilate the impulses, but we can control them. For the truth of this, appeal may be made with confidence to the experience of every man or woman who is trying to live well. What a man is, then, is not the outcome of his bodily organism but of the way in which he uses that organism. If he yields to all its solicitations he reverses the true relation of body and spirit, and spirit becomes progressively the slave of bodily appetite. The higher capacities are atrophied; the man degrades himself to the animal level.

Similarly, we are not the slaves of our dispositions or of our temperaments. These make it easier for us to act in one way rather than in another in the various situations of our lives. But if at any time we recognize that the easiest way is not the best way, we can more or less successfully refuse to follow it. And with perseverance comes facility. The naturally irritable person can cultivate patient amiability; the volatile can develop steadiness and concentration; the weakly susceptible can practise insight and firmness.

(ii) DEVELOPMENT.—It follows that, from whatever point of view we regard life, we see that each of us is both the architect and the builder of his concrete self as it exists here and now. If his purposes are clear and good the whole force of habit becomes an aid to moral development; if he lives for the sake of bodily pleasures, it depresses him lower and lower in the scale of spiritual being. Habit not only rules modes of bodily action, but the thoughts become habituated to dwell on this or that class of ideas, the affections to attach

themselves to this or that kind of object, the will to choose and to pursue this or that form of endeavour.

With the progress of life goes on, then, an intentional organization of the self. Never does it become complete. We organize those spiritual activities which fit in with the purposes we have chosen. But there are always minor characteristics which are not made the object of will. We all have unconsciously-formed habits as well as those we have deliberately tried to acquire. The relative scope of the intentionally-formed and the accidental spheres differs both among individuals and in communities. More importance, for instance, is attached to good manners in some countries than in others, and in some classes of society than in other circles in the same country. Our own ancestors thought them more important as the sphere of 'minor morality' than they appear to be commonly estimated among us to-day. In this we doubtless suffer loss. The influence of small habitual acts of politeness on consideration for others may not be measurable, but it is real.

(iii) NATURE.—Whatever its extent, the intentionally-organized part of the self is what is meant by *Character*. Character is thus seen to be, not a fixed thing born in us, but a constantly developing core of personality. It takes up into itself a greater or lesser part of the whole potential personality, according as it is formed under the influence of wide or narrow purposes. A narrow aim means not only a narrow character but a poorer personality, for innate possibilities which are outside its limited scope are dependent on accident for realization. Character never absorbs the whole of personality, and so no one attains the utmost perfection of life possible to him at birth. But it is the most stable thing in us. On it we rely both in ourselves and in others. So far as we forecast what another will do, it is on the basis of knowledge of his character, not of acquaintance with his whole personality. Because of a man's character we respect

or despise him: on the ground of his whole personality we like or dislike him. This explains the quite common fact of experience that respect and liking for another have no constant connexion with each other.

From these considerations it is evident that the value of a man depends on his character, and that the formation of character is the outcome of moral endeavour. One who leaves character to form itself becomes what is called a person of 'no character,' which implies not that he consciously pursues evil purposes, but that he has no permanent purposes at all. Volatile temperaments are inherently prone to yield to this kind of temptation, but to do so is disastrous: the personality remains unorganized—an aggregate of disconnected impulses. In the strict etymological sense of the word, the result is a 'dissolute' personality: one in which the bonds that should bind it together are dissolved.

Character, then, is formed by personal activities of thought, feeling, and will. It is wider than conduct, for it includes the inner life of desires and purposes and affections, which is never fully expressed in bodily actions. So far as a character is good, inclination coincides with duty; the moral law is not merely obeyed but loved and accepted as the guiding principle of life. From the standpoint of morality the formation of character is the most important work of life.

5. Sociality.

So far attention has been concentrated on personality as individual. But as each lives in incessant interaction with his fellows, it has been implied throughout that individuality is only one aspect of personality, and that sociality, or the individual's relations to his fellows is another. Each by itself is an abstraction.

We are persons, not because we are separate from others,

but because we are self-conscious; and we are dependent on others, not because they are not ourselves, but because in love, and fellowship, and understanding, we can assimilate their spiritual life, and so enlarge and enrich our own. We know ourselves only as members of society, attached to our fellow-men by many bonds; and if, one by one we think these all away, we have nothing left, for we have withdrawn from our personality all its actual constituents.

It follows that any ethical system which ignores the fundamental truth that sociality and individuality are indivisible factors in personality, and regards morality exclusively from either the individual or the social standpoint, stands condemned as neglecting essential facts.

6. Organic Life of Society.

Society is a continuous growth, taking up the acquirements of the past, and developing them into further acquirements. This is evident in the case of culture: in the accumulation of knowledge each pioneer sets out from the goal reached by his predecessors. Each advance is continued progress along a road already partially traversed.

But increase of knowledge is attended by more enlightened estimates of value. The more the unity of the world is realized the more the value of things is seen to depend on their relations to a wider whole. With the growth of astronomy the standard of value for the motions of the planets could no longer be conceived as influence on the destinies of individual men and women. It had to be sought in the constitution of the solar system.

Similarly, as insight into the laws of matter gives increased power to use those forces for the furtherance of human purposes, the need for cooperation becomes increasingly manifest. Production on a large scale by the aid of machinery both requires the organized labour of many and supplies the needs of many. Increased facilities of com-

munication widens the range of both these forms of co-operation. And cooperation implies mutual understanding and sympathy. So, with the advance of conscious common life, the standard of value becomes increasingly independent of the preferences of individuals. The contribution of each to the common stock must be estimated with reference to the common end. Like knowledge, insight into value is a social product to which individuals contribute according to their ability.

It follows that the life of society cannot be understood from an investigation confined to the lives of the people who compose it. Society is more than an aggregate of individual atoms. There never was a time when men and society needed to be conjoined, for they never existed, or could have existed, apart. The society in which the individual lives becomes wider and richer as age succeeds age; but man can no more exist apart from any society than society can exist apart from men. Like the individual, society has a life of its own, flowing ever forward and taking up into itself each new generation. And each generation contributes to the advance. In this sense, the life of society is organic, and it is permissible to speak of a social organism, though this must not be taken to imply that society has a self-conscious centre or personality. Its thoughts, its purposes, its estimates of value, are those of the people who compose it.

7. The Individual and his Epoch.

(i) **MOULDING INFLUENCE OF SOCIETY.**—Into such an organic social life each child is born, and living in it determines the kind of adult he will become. There is no reason to believe that the brain of an infant born into cultivated society to-day differs markedly from that of one born among the wildest Tartar hordes of the Dark Ages. But he grows up in a very different social and spiritual environment, and the result is a very different kind of man. Everybody is

emphatically the child of his age. His thoughts, aspirations, and valuations, are relative to the culture of his own day. These are conveyed to him, especially in youth, by example, precept, and exhortation; and, if needful, the theory is supported by enforced practice. As Sir Leslie Stephen put it: "We are born, not into a chaotic crowd, but into an organized army, and we must learn to keep step and rank and to obey orders."¹

Each age has not only its own culture but its own dominant interests. There is truth in the epigram that in the Middle Ages the centre of interest was God; during the Renaissance, Man; in modern times, the Atom. Theology and philosophy almost exclusively engaged the great intellects of the mediaeval centuries; the scholars, poets, and artists of the Renaissance were intensely pre-occupied with human powers and passions, and loved the literatures of ancient Greece and Rome because in them they found man's nature portrayed frankly and vividly; during these latter centuries men's thoughts have been increasingly absorbed in physical science.

(ii) GREAT MINDS.—This moulding influence of the social environment is operative on the greatest as on the least of mankind. Plato's ideal state was fashioned on a Greek model, though the conception was inspired by deep-lying ideas which are true for all time. Dante's *Divina Commedia* breathes the whole spirit of mediaevalism: it could not have been written in ancient Athens, nor in modern Paris or New York. Shakespeare's plays could not have been conceived in the age of Homer, nor the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* in that of Shakespeare.

The greatest minds, then, express their age and its aspirations. They seek answers to the problems which press upon it for solution. But they also lead their age. They are

¹ *The Science of Ethics*, p. 110.

reflected by it as well as in it. For the greater the mind, the more it makes disciples among its contemporaries, and the more it directly influences later generations.

(iii) **CONTINUITY OF SOCIAL INFLUENCES.**—This influence means that their thoughts are assimilated by countless multitudes, so as to become bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh. Plato, Aristotle, Dante, Shakespeare, have lived throughout all later times in vast numbers of men and women. Still more true is this of the Sacred Scriptures and the Christian tradition. Christianity for nearly two thousand years has entered into the very marrow of men's thoughts and valuations. Much as individuals and nations may seem to depart from its principles and to violate its precepts, it is only because it is the core of our civilization that we are struck by the discrepancy. If evangelical principles of life were not implicit in the moral consciousness of to-day their violation would be unrecognized. People cannot free themselves from Christian influences, however strenuously they may try. Many men of the Renaissance attempted to do so, and to revive Pagan ideals. So far as the movement was positive in emphasizing elements which mediaeval times had tended to neglect, it was taken up into the general onward flow of civilization. But so far as it was negative, in that it tried to excise elements which mediaevalism had emphasized, it was as ephemeral as it was artificial. Society can no more return to an earlier stage of life than can the individual.

(iv) **INFLUENCE OF MINOR COMMUNITIES.**—Every individual, then, shows the salient features of his time. What he knows, thinks, values, despises, admires, is in some sort and in some degree a reflexion from without. Not, indeed, of the whole of humanity at that epoch. A native of China or Japan is markedly different in all these matters from an Englishman. So, in a less degree, is a Frenchman or an Italian. Humanity as a whole is too little organized or

harmonious in aims, views, and modes of life, to form a society. Only so far as culture is common is there intellectual community, and only so far as valuation is common is there moral community. Hence the directive social influence on each person is that of the nation.

Nor is this exercised immediately. The family and the narrow social circle in which he moves are the most effectual forces in moulding the spiritual life of each individual. In these he forms those early opinions and habits of thought and will which more or less colour the whole future life. In these he acquires language, the most effective instrument for assimilating the spiritual life of the time. For the language of a people is always the mirror of its culture, enshrining its religious beliefs and doubts, its philosophical, social, and economic, doctrines and disputes, its valuations of both facts and ideas, its science, its criticism on art, its accepted code of conduct. But the language each learns to speak conveys this culture through the medium of the spiritual life of the family and social circle. And every family and group has its prepossessions, which are embodied in its speech. As Sir Leslie Stephen has said: "Words not merely denote an object, but associate it with certain emotions. We catch the subtle contagion of prejudice from the language which it has impregnated. We hate a race because its name has been used as a term of abuse. Papist amongst Protestants, heretic amongst Catholics, Jew amongst Christians, are words which have been used to propagate bitter hatred combined with an almost complete ignorance of the hated object."¹

Other social formative influences, intermediate between the nation and the family, are the various smaller communities of which each individual becomes a member, either by inheritance or by choice—such as school, college, church,

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

club, literary society, trade union, or what not. These are classifications of aims and opinions, and the same person commonly belongs to several of them. Each has its characteristic attitude towards all that is without its bounds. In each is more or less intimate intercourse between the members, who identify themselves in various degrees with its main object. The closer and longer continued is the intercourse, the more numerous are the points on which the association affects the personal life, and the stronger is the loyalty towards it; a relation which is more than feeling, for it is an attitude of the whole self. As in the typical, though wider, case of patriotism it cannot be fully analysed, and its strength may long be hidden in the depths of being till some crisis calls it forth.

From the wider point of view of the nation, the influence of one or more of these may be anti-social. The organs in which the life of the nation finds partial expression may be out of harmony in the same way as the impulses or desires of an individual. When this occurs there is conflict between the claims of the narrower but more intense social life of the smaller society and the wider but more diffuse life of the larger. Each member of the former is then called upon to justify or to modify his estimate of the value of the points in which the divergence has appeared.

(v) ASSIMILATION.—The recognition of the individual's dependence on his fellows, both contemporary and of earlier times, has led some to advance the theory that the whole formation of personality can be explained from without. "Everything that we have, and everything that we are, we owe to the external world; nor is man himself aught else but what he is made by the objects which surround him," wrote the eighteenth century French philosopher, Helvétius.¹ This theory presupposes that all are born exactly alike, with

¹ *De l'esprit*, vol. ii., p. 306.

capacities identically the same in kind and in strength. If it were true, it would necessarily be meaningless to talk of duty or of responsibility. Morality would be an empty name. Man would be as clay formed by the potter, and the potter the surroundings in which he lives. The conviction that he can in any way order his life would be a delusion. However he might appear to himself or to others to be a free agent he would really be an automaton.

Against such a theory our whole conscious being revolts as doing violence to convictions from which we cannot free ourselves even if we would. We know we do not always follow the advice of others nor obey the laws of society. Few of us but are aware that we transgress at times the laws of our physical being. Moreover, as we look around us we see abundant evidence that what a man becomes is not fatally determined by the circumstances amid which he has grown up. We see brothers brought up in the same family and school, and subjected to the same intellectual influences. Yet one develops into a musician, one into a novelist, one into an engineer. Each has an innate propensity to find intellectual sustenance in this rather than in that part of the field of knowledge open to him, and equally open to his brothers. Similarly, though all have been subjected to the same moral and religious influences, one may become a saint, another the black sheep which proverbial wisdom, generalizing from wide experience, declares to be found in every flock. Facts are too stubborn to allow the open-minded inquirer to believe that either he himself or anybody that he knows is a passive creature of circumstances.

8. Summary.

The reality of individuality, then, is as certain as is the reality of the influence of surroundings. Personality is the living interaction of the two factors. So no two personalities are alike, for each has developed by assimilating from the

whole potential world only that which is cognate to itself. So, too, none is complete, for what has been realized never exhausts the possibilities of realization.

We will sum up in the words of the late Dr. Illingworth:

As persons we are units, individual selves, face to face with a multiplicity of other persons and things. And we grow and develop . . . by spiritually incorporating these others in ourselves. We assimilate persons, who are at first alien to us, in fellowship and friendship, and utilize their capacities and receive and reciprocate their love. We learn the various sciences, which are at first outside and unintelligible to us, and so make them our own. We enrich our imagination by appropriating all the varieties of art. And so we gradually realize ourselves by including more and more of the world's multiplicity within the sphere of our own unity, and thus making the many one; while, given time and opportunity, we can foresee no limit to the range which this development may take. Meanwhile, at the root of it all is the will. It is a continual process of self-affirmation, of self-emphasis, of the will to be."¹

¹ *Christian Character*, p. 178.

CHAPTER III.

FREEDOM.

1. **Consciousness of Freedom.**

(i) **ITS REALITY.**—The question of freedom is fundamental in ethics, for at bottom it is just this: Are what we call our acts truly ours, or are we really automata, impelled by forces not ourselves? Are we like the rifle-shot that kills a man, or like the soldier who aims and projects the shot? If our acts are really the outcome of our personality we are responsible for them. If in all that we do we are impelled by forces not ourselves, all talk of good and evil, of right and wrong, is meaningless; morality is an empty dream.

If we interrogate consciousness its answer is perfectly clear that we do shape our own lives. Moreover, nobody doubts this in practice. All conceive purposes, form plans, make decisions, credit themselves both with success and with failure. In retrospect it often appears in the light of what has happened that it would have been wiser to have acted otherwise on a certain occasion than we did, and no doubt is felt that it would have been possible to do so had we so chosen. The same conviction was present at the moment of action, or deliberation would be meaningless. Reflexion does but confirm it. Those who in theory deny most strenuously that man is free, in practice act on the assumption that he is. They do not hesitate to choose between going out or staying at home, between alternative places in which to spend a holiday, between various ways of investing their money. They,

too, condemn their own past mistakes and make resolves and plans for the future. There is, indeed, universal agreement that as a fact men are conscious of freedom, and act on that consciousness.

(ii) ITS LIMITATIONS.—At the same time experience teaches us that to make a resolution does not always ensure that it is carried out. This does not touch the question of freedom if the hindrance is that external circumstances prove to be different from our anticipation of them. But often this is not the case, and we have to acknowledge that our own want of perseverance or our own impatience is the sole reason why we have failed to do what we resolved to do. We are conscious, then, that a freely formed purpose may fail to be realized in action. So the freedom to which consciousness bears witness is not absolute: it is limited both from without and from within.

Moreover, the purposes we form are closely related to what we are and what we have been. Character is continuously being formed by our activities, spiritual and bodily, as a more or less perfectly organized body of habits. Our interests are directed into certain channels, and our plans of action are the outcome of our interests. So our freedom is related to our past. The selfish man seeks his own individual advantage, the habitual criminal plots further crimes, the saint aims at greater holiness.

Yet a complete spiritual revolution is not impossible, nor, indeed, uncommon. Every case of conversion testifies to its reality. The wicked man may turn away from his wickedness which he has committed and do that which is lawful and right. This may occur suddenly or gradually, but in either case it shows that men are not inexorably bound in the chains of their own past.

(iii) SUMMARY.—The facts of consciousness, therefore, are that we have a conviction of freedom, but not of perfect or unlimited freedom. Our activities are normally the outcome

of our past, and are conditioned both by our strength or weakness and by external circumstances. But men may reform their characters through a sufficiently strong impulsion. Such are the classes of facts on which a true theory of human freedom must be built, and by agreement with which it must be verified.

2. Arguments against Freedom.

(i) THEIR THEORETICAL CHARACTER.—Freedom, then, cannot be denied on the ground that it is not based on facts or verified by facts. All such denial rests on the assumption that human freedom is inconsistent with some established theory. But as, when assured facts really contradict theories, all scientific thought grants that the theories must give way, so denial of freedom can be maintained only by denial that the facts are what they appear to be. The argument runs: True, men seem to themselves to be free, but that is illusion: the apparent facts cannot be what they seem to be.

No doubt, illusion is a frequent experience. The apparent testimony of consciousness is that the sun passes daily across the sky, and for centuries everybody accepted that as a fact of nature as well as a fact of consciousness. In looking into a stereoscope a scene really printed on a flat surface appears in consciousness as in three dimensions. In all such cases, however, we have two alternative explanations of one set of facts, and each explanation is itself based on facts of experience. The testimony of consciousness may be explained either way.

With the consciousness of freedom there is nothing analogous to this. A theory that the self has really no freedom cannot explain the facts in which consciousness feels that it is free. If there is no freedom, those facts are not due to illusion, or mistaken explanation of accepted facts, but to delusion—the facts do not exist, we merely imagine that they do. Such distrust of the testimony of consciousness, consis-

tently carried out, would lead to universal scepticism. For, if consciousness cannot be trusted as to facts to which it bears constant witness, what assurance have we that it is ever trustworthy?

(ii) THEOLOGICAL.—The older theories advanced to disprove the reality of human freedom were those of fatalism, whether conceived as the determination of human conduct by the conjunctions of the stars at the moment of birth, or based on the conception of Divine foreknowledge. Thus, the theology of Calvin denies freedom to man, and lays down as fundamental the doctrine that God's foreknowledge implies predestination, and consequently that no man can act otherwise than he does. The argument owes what speciousness it possesses to begging the question at issue. It assumes that each person's conduct is wholly determined by the reaction of surroundings upon innate impulses, and is thus under the law of physical causation. It proves the self is not free on the assumption that it is not active.

But if God has endowed man with free activity then divine foresight as to what he will do does not imply that all which he does is the carrying out of a predetermined divine plan. If a father give his little son half-a-crown, and, in order to train him by experience in the use of money, leave him free to spend it as he will, he may foresee the great probability that it will not be spent with remarkable wisdom. As St. Augustine put it: "We assert both that God knows all things before they come to pass, and that we do by our own free will whatsoever we know and feel to be done by us only because we will it."¹ So, in the words of Sir Leslie Stephen, "the bare fact that an omniscient, or even a highly intelligent being could foresee my actions with certainty, would not destroy my responsibility."²

(iii) PHYSICAL.—This theological and metaphysical objec-

¹ *De civ. Dei.*, v. 9.

² *The Science of Ethics*, p. 292.

tion, though not altogether obsolete, has largely given place to arguments based on physical science. It is urged that there can be no science of conduct unless prediction is as possible as in physics and astronomy; therefore that the postulate of universal causation must be accepted. Now the axiom of physical causation is that the same cause always produces the same effect. Even in physics this is only approximately verifiable, for there never is absolute identity between two series of events. In the spiritual life this is even more the case. There is no repetition; for the same conditions can never be renewed, because the self is modified by every experience, and can never return to the previous state. If external conditions are repeated, the whole of the conditions are not, for the self is among the conditions from which the result issues. Uniformity of causation, as seen in invariable sequence, therefore, is not a postulate of the spiritual life.

Physics, indeed, is driven from the position that nature shows invariability of phenomenal sequence to the conception of an unalterable mathematical relation, expressed as the Conservation of Energy. It is true that this is only a hypothesis; and one which does not seem capable of perfect verification. But the acceptance of it as probably true for the physical world is so far from binding us to accept it as ruling the spiritual life, that it compels us to reject such application.

Of course the body is part of the physical world, and the laws of matter must be exemplified in its activities. The nervous system is the exchange through which impressions from external matter evoke responsive bodily actions. "If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh?"¹ The physical series is self-contained. Yet, if you prick me I not only bleed but feel pain, and, it may be,

¹ Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice*, iii. 1.

either gratitude or resentment, according to whether you are a surgeon making an injection for my good, or an enemy seeking my blood. My subsequent action is decided by these feelings, not by the nerve tremours which were the physical sequence to the cut and cause only a reflex movement of shrinking. It is spirit that determines the form of the bodily activity, and as that activity enters into the physical series, its force and amount exemplify the conservation of energy. Spirit intervenes in the physical series not as part of it, not as taking up energy from it or as contributing energy to it, but as determining the direction in which the energy actually present shall find vent. The doctrine of the conservation of energy would break down if the whole of the energy involved were not accounted for in the physical series.

(iv) **PSYCHOLOGICAL.**—This may be granted, and yet it be held that nevertheless the law of causation holds in the spiritual life; for that every phase of consciousness is the inevitable outcome of the preceding phase. It is urged that activity, physical or mental, is always due to the present mental state of the agent in relation to the present surroundings. But that mental state is the outcome of his previous state, and so on till we come to the moment of birth. Thus original endowment and the influence of surroundings together account for the whole of life. And as original endowment is wholly due to heredity, it only carries the chain of causation further back.

In a sense this makes a man the determinant of his activity, for his acts are seen as the outcome of his character, and it is urged that could complete knowledge of this and of the surroundings be attained, all the conditions would be laid bare, and the consequent act be predicted as confidently as astronomy can predict an eclipse.

It would follow that the conviction of freedom is a delusion due to oblivion of the antecedents to our choice.

Such a theory "cannot escape from the fatal paradox, that the more thoughtless we are, the more we enjoy the sense of freedom, and feel by consequence our own responsibility; the more we reflect, the more freedom disappears; so that that which seemed to be man's prerogative is enjoyed least by the philosopher and the man of cultivation, and most by the child and the drunkard."¹

3. **Examination of Freedom.**

(i) **ACTIVITY OF THE SELF.**—The error underlying this theory of determinism is that it takes the results of analysis of consciousness as real existences, not as mere abstractions made by our own minds in introspection. The self is either conceived as a passive observer of sequences of its own phases which are determined by their nature alone, in the same way as it is an observer of sequences in the physical world which are independent of its volition. Or it is even identified with the series of conscious phases, in which case there is nothing which can be conceived as free. But apart from an active self these abstractions have no existence, even as the self emptied of its concrete existence and reduced, as it were, to a metaphysical point is a figment. It is in actual life that freedom must be sought.

(ii) **HABIT.**—Yet in our lives we do find much of the determination of one phase of consciousness by another. In instinctive and impulsive actions there is an immediate response to the impression made on our minds by some item in the surroundings, as when the sight of a child struggling in the water leads to an immediate plunge of a passer-by.

A large and ever-increasing proportion of our activities is habitual, and this is as true of thought, feeling, and seeking, as of bodily actions. With continued repetition a habit approaches ever nearer to automatism. The occasion offers,

¹ The late Arbp. Thomson in *Oxford Essays*, 1855; p. 182.

and the act is done, often before we are fully conscious that we are doing it. The conscious perception is followed almost automatically by a responsive activity. The whole self is not called into play.

There is, however, possibility of inhibition. We can refrain from following the habit in any one case; we can even break a habit altogether, though, as we all know, this involves a long continued effort.

Why do we ever try to break a habit? Because in some way it has been brought home to us that the habit is undesirable. This means that it conflicts with the pursuit of some end conceived as good. The habit does not express our whole selves; it may even be that it is at variance with our personality as a whole. It is when this is recognized that we set ourselves to break the habit. Then the activity of a superficial portion of the self is inhibited by the activity of the whole self.

We are responsible for our habitual activities because we can inhibit them. To inhibit is to act with fullest freedom. To follow habit without inhibition is to act freely in a secondary and less perfect sense. If we could not inhibit we should not be free in habitual action. As we can, the habit expresses ourselves in so far as we take no active steps against it, though not in the sense that it expresses them fully.

(iii) DEGREES OF FREEDOM.—We may, then, legitimately speak of degrees of freedom in the spiritual as in social life, where the autocrat, the citizen, the criminal in hiding, the prisoner, the slave, are free in various degrees and in various relations. This is wholly consistent with the other aspects of spiritual life. All persons are not of equal intellectual power, nor is the same man always fully master of the intellectual powers he possesses. He is not always free to think on his highest level, for headache, illness, worry about other things, may all hinder him.

(iv) PREDICTION.—In the ordinary course of life occasion comes but seldom for the exercise of the full power of the self. Were it otherwise our whole energy would be so engaged in deciding what to do, that but little would be left for the actual doing. We organize our lives round our purposes and so form our characters. Habit is, therefore, a factor in all activities which express our character, as distinguished from instinctive and impulsive responses to particular elements in the surroundings. Hence, so far as we know a character—whether our own or another's—we can foresee with some probability the kind of action with which certain kinds of situations will be met. The more common the situation and the more frequent the habitual response in the past, the more confident the prediction. But we can never be sure. There is never bare repetition. There are doubtless recurrences of similar situations, but never of identical situations. And the self which meets them is not unchanged, for every phase through which it has passed since it last had to deal with that kind of situation has, in some way and to some degree, modified it. Hence, the most intimate knowledge of a character as shown in previous conduct can justify only probable anticipation, never confident prediction.

(v) MODIFICATION OF CHARACTER.—Character is thus seen to be in constant evolution. Each new situation is met in a new way, but met by an organized self differing to the required extent from what it was before. The self acting is never the self of the time before the action, but the self *in* the action dominated by the idea of the action. The self in acting is conscious of freedom, for it is working out its own volition. But the action is not separable from the self, nor the self from the action. Each apart from the other is an abstraction. The concrete reality is the acting self. Every activity of the self, then, not only deals with an external situation, but in dealing with it determines its own

organization, absorbing more and more of the personality into the stable core of character, or hindering such absorption by dissipation of energy in activities repugnant to each other.

There is thus no difficulty in understanding the modifications of our own character of which we are conscious when we compare the aspirations, valuations, and purposes, which mark it to-day with those of a score or more of years ago. The modifications may be great or small, but modifications there must be, for we have lived through those years with all they have brought us of fruition, of disappointment, of joy, of sorrow, of disillusion.

Such modification is usually accomplished by almost imperceptible degrees. Our lives are not series of crises. But a crisis may come, and the change of character be both sudden and profound, as when Christian lost the burden of sin at the foot of the Cross. Before, he lamented "my conscience within afflicted me," but after, "then was Christian glad and lightsome. . . . Then he stood still a while to look and wonder : for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his burden. He looked therefore, and looked again, even till the springs that were in his head sent the waters down his cheeks." ¹

The hidden depths of personality are stirred, and in strong emotion break through the mould of accustomed feeling and action. This is not a force apart from the hitherto habitual manifestation of the self, but is the root of reality of which that has been but a partial expression. The old phenomenal self is not annihilated, but taken up and absorbed, and there issues a character which more fully expresses the whole self. That the old habitual tendencies are not dead is evidenced by the struggle between them and the new direction given by the deeper personality—a struggle which never entirely dies out, though with perseverance in the new ways it progressively lessens in intensity.

¹ Bunyan : *Pilgrim's Progress*.

It is in the depths of personality, then, that the true self is found. *There* are the great impulses of life, the ideals and feelings of value of which while engrossed in the routine of life men are often but dimly and vaguely conscious, but which prompt them to seek satisfaction for the whole of their being. It is when a man is fully aware of this concrete activity of the self that he feels himself most truly free

(vi) DELIBERATION AND CHOICE.

(a) *Facts of Consciousness*.—So long as we go on in the customary way we do not carry our case to this Court of Appeal. It is when habit will not serve, and we have to decide between incompatible modes of action, that such appeal is needed. What, then, happens in deliberation and choice? When two alternative courses are open to us, and we select the one and reject the other we are persuaded at the moment that we could, if we choose, adopt the one we refuse. And when we afterwards examine our conduct in retrospect we have the same conviction that we could have decided otherwise.

(b) *Liberty of Indifference*.—As has been seen, those who deny freedom say that this conviction is illusory, and that the decision is the inevitable outcome of the past. This is the theory of *Determinism*, on whatever grounds it is based. At the opposite pole are the upholders of what has been called the *Liberty of Indifference*, who make the choice independent of the past. The will is regarded as a kind of separate organ of the self which decides what we shall do, irrespective both of what we are and of what we have hitherto done.

Now, in a sense, everything we do is our act, but in merely instinctive and impulsive action we have the response of a small part of our personality, not of our whole selves. In the fullest sense of the word such acts are not *ours*, but nearly reflex responses of part of our nature to what is external to us. Those who follow every impulse are driven hither and

thither in response to salient elements in the whole concrete situation. They give no serious consideration to their activities, whether mental or bodily, and so are aware of little or no resistance in themselves to whatever they do. But so far from testifying to freedom this only shows that they are allowing themselves to be determined from without. The unchecked sway of impulse is really an abdication of freedom, for freedom implies deliberate adoption of purpose.

Neither can an empty and indifferent will explain choice following deliberation. If the will could decide between alternatives without any motive—or reason—for choosing one rather than the other, then, the decision would be that of something not ourselves, for which we could have no responsibility. But really the position is unthinkable. Decision implies reason, and if the alternatives were really indifferent to the will, there would be no reason for selecting the one rather than the other. "There is no more work for the will here than there would be in beginning to walk with the right leg and not the left, or using the left side of the mouth for mastication in preference to the right."¹

(c) *Analysis*.—The arguments for determinism, and for an indifferent liberty of will, break down through the same error of taking abstractions for actual concrete life. In deliberation a man is not like a pendulum oscillating from side to side but remaining unaffected by the oscillations. He considers first this course, then that. But the self in the latter consideration is a self modified by the former. The reasons for that have been taken up into the self, and it is this enriched self which turns to the latter alternative. So, if it return to the former, it does not deal with it as at first. It is now a self which has considered and assimilated the reasons for the latter. It is not the self which first approached the problem that ultimately decides it, but that self enlarged by

¹ Thomson : *Op. cit.*, p. 182.

reflexion on each alternative solution. And in the process not merely the self previously organized in character with its habitual tendencies comes into play. It is the whole self with its profound and obscure purposes and emotions which adopts these reasons rather than those. So the resultant decision is the outcome of personality, and the fuller that outcome the more freely it expresses what the man is.

When the decision is taken and the act is done, to say it could not have been otherwise simply means that what is done is done. Before the choice is made, to say it could be made either way merely means that before the decision is made it is not made. In each case abstraction is made of the actual deciding. In deciding, the self acts. It does not stand apart from its action: the action is itself, living here and now. And in living it is not simply the product of the past, for it envisages the present and the future. Its purpose is not something outside itself which it selects from among a number of purposes, and appropriates as a thing to be acquired and held. It is itself, meeting the situation in which it is living and acting. Not for a moment does the onward flow of the spiritual life cease while a stationary self compares courses in no essential relation to itself until one is selected and the other rejected. Reflexion is a phase in the onward movement, enriching, enlarging, and directing it. The act of decision is free because it thus emanates from the spiritual life.

(vii) RESPONSIBILITY.—Were it otherwise freedom would not imply responsibility. We are responsible for our acts in exact proportion as they express our personalities. In as far as they do not express what we are we are not responsible for them. I am not responsible for falling and breaking my leg if the floor on which I am standing gives way and precipitates me into the cellar. I am not responsible for closing the eye when a grain of dust or a blinding ray of light enters it. I *am* responsible for my impulsive and habitual acts because if

I choose I can inhibit them ; and I shall so choose if my personality awakens to something undesirable in their character and probable results. I *am* responsible for my choice between alternatives because in deliberation I can bring my personality to bear on them. I *am* responsible for my character because it is formed by acts of choice. And the degrees of responsibility appear to vary in direct proportion with the extent to which my whole self acts in each case ; that is, in proportion to the freedom of the act.

4. **Limitations of Freedom.**

It is evident that our freedom is not absolute. We can only deal with situations as they arise, and we are limited to such situations. In other words, the possibilities of development of personality are not infinite. We can grow only by assimilating that which is without us, and both capacity and the duration of life are limited. Doubtless, we do not reach the limit, but it is there nevertheless. The need for specialization in knowledge illustrates this, and examination of one's own life soon compels the acknowledgement that we do not do all we might, whether in learning, or in friendship, or in service.

Then, again, to carry out our purposes we must act in the material world, and there we are restricted by laws which we cannot set aside however much they may seem to hinder us. We cannot enrich our souls by oral converse with friends at the antipodes or with the great spirits of the past.

Further, the clear apprehension of the meaning of our own personality involves equally clear recognition of the personality of others. They, too, are living agents growing by appropriation of their environment. We incorporate them, but they also incorporate us. They are not mere means for the enrichment of our lives or the effecting of our purposes. Like ourselves, each is a living person with his own aims and thoughts and affections. Nobody, therefore, is justified in

trying to make other people mere instruments to carry out his will or to gratify his passions. Each one of us, as one person among many, is limited by the rights of others.

So, too, each is limited by the rights of the community of which he is a member. The personality of the individual is a social personality, and man can develop only in society. It follows that between him and society are reciprocal rights. While each person has the right to develop unhindered and to act freely so far as his action does not interfere with the like rights of his fellows, society as the organized body in which alone his life is possible, has the right to claim from him not only acquiescence in its laws but cooperation in its aims.

5. Development of Freedom.

Yet these limitations can be extended, though not removed. Men to-day have much more effective freedom in carrying out their plans than had their forefathers. Increased knowledge of the material world enables them to use more effectively physical forces for their own ends. Increased cooperation and solidarity with others makes it possible for each to devote himself more fully to his own special pursuits, relying on the organization of society for the supply of needs which primitive man must satisfy by his own direct exertions. Increased opportunities for education mean increased possibility of development of innate capacity. Advance in medical and cognate knowledge and in surgical skill extends the probable duration of life.

Both use of the physical world and the cooperation of our fellows are conditional upon obedience. Freedom is not found in setting at nought the laws either of the material world or of society. In proportion as we assimilate those laws by adopting them as principles of our action, and so making them elements in our personality, freedom is increased. For freedom means nothing if it does not imply power to con-

ceive and realize purposes. The inherent opposition popularly assumed to exist between freedom and the constraint of discipline is based on that false view of freedom which identifies it with unhindered acting upon impulse. Both in the physical and in the social world we are free not *from* law, but *by* law—not by setting ourselves to act in defiance of law, but by acting in willing conformity with it.

The same holds true in the inner world of conscious life. The greatest hindrances to freedom are within ourselves. We resolve, and we fail to carry out our resolution because we yield to the temptation of idleness, we shrink from effort, we fail to persevere, we allow ourselves to be led away by various solicitations from without. But nothing external to us is in itself a temptation or a solicitation. The attractive power inheres in the relation of the external to something within us—to some part of our personality. The more open we leave ourselves to such temptations and solicitations the less free we are to act as in our best moments we not only acknowledge we should act, but resolve to act. But each such appeal is to a part only of our personality, and its strength depends upon the extent to which we allow it to occupy our thoughts and stimulate our imaginations. By reflexion we can call opposed tendencies into activity; we can bring images of good into conflict with images of evil; we can inhibit the latter by dwelling on the former.

In the inner life, then, increase of freedom comes from recognition of the true law of our being and from making it the principle of our lives. That true law is such a synthesis of the impulses, tendencies, and strivings, in which our personality manifests itself, that they are organized round the ultimate purpose to seek perfection of life; that is, the fullest and richest possible personal life in both its individual and its social aspects. Organization of this kind involves restraint and inhibition or diversion of all impulses which tend to turn us from the straight path to the desired end. It is not in

indiscriminate yielding to impulse and desire that satisfaction of the whole personality is to be found, but in subordination and coordination of impulses and desires in accordance with a clearly conceived good to be attained by a definite course of right activity in desiring, feeling, and thinking, as well as in outward conduct. We are not born free, but we painfully grow into freedom by our own regulation of our lives, and this growth is effected through assimilation of universal law. Self-discipline is a condition of this growth as surely as is external discipline, for each is a necessary means to the assimilation of law into personality. In an age impatient of all restraint it is especially important that this true function of discipline should be recognized.

CHAPTER IV.

PURPOSE.

1. **Consciousness of Purpose.**

The discussion in the last chapter has shown that freedom means power to direct life towards the attainment of chosen ends. Freedom and purpose are mutually implicated: freedom without purpose would give mere random activity; purpose without freedom would be an empty delusion. Action not directed by the self towards a valued end is not expressive of personal life, is not truly our own action for which we are responsible.

This witnesses from another standpoint to the fact that growth in freedom attends organization of life. In childhood there are tendencies rather than purposes, and the purposes in which those tendencies do show themselves are narrow, disconnected, and transient. Only gradually are they systematized and brought into various relations of subordination and coordination, and this process attains very different degrees of completeness in different people. Those whose lives are consciously ruled by one leading purpose are few in comparison with those who seek a variety of ends which at best are but loosely related to each other. The greater the systematization of purposes the greater the effective freedom.

Purpose is an activity of the whole self. There must be intellectual comprehension of the end to be sought and of its relation to present circumstances, that end must appeal to

the feelings and affections as worthy ^{of} the effort required to realize it, and by an act of will the resolution to put forth that effort must be made. And in all, the fact of the dynamic force of life is assumed. To form a purpose is not to create energy but to direct it.

2. The Dynamic Forces of Life.

(i) **INSTINCT AND DISPOSITION.**—The very essence of life is that it is a dynamic or propulsive force, and, as such, makes for its own preservation and enrichment. The various purposes we deliberately form are all partial manifestations of this tendency. As the biologist can see that the organic processes in plant and animal life work out the end of the growth and vitality of the organism, so the watchful adult can discern in the activities of childhood purpose of which the child is at most but dimly conscious. Play develops capacities, though this development is not the object the child has in view.

In a less degree it is the same throughout life. All that gives strength and vigour and endurance to our purposes is never clearly present in full consciousness. Our deeper and wider purposes determine our conduct long after we have ceased to give deliberate consideration to them. They induce the formation of habits of willing, feeling, thinking, and acting; and the tendency of all habitual activity is to carry itself out without constant conscious direction.

We are born with tendencies to feel and act in certain more or less definite kinds of ways; that is, with embryonic dispositions and instincts. As life goes on we accumulate experiences. We get to understand the world in which we live, and we regard its elements with various degrees of affection or repulsion. We develop interests which determine the lines of our efforts. Instinct and disposition continue active, but each is suffused with intelligence, and so brought into relation with the whole personality.

In lower forms of animal life instinct works more or less automatically, and the lower the form of life the more fully reflex is the active response to some definite stimulus. An insect reacts in the same way to all situations of the same kind. The higher animals show more varied reactions, but the same class of stimulus is still met by the same kind of response.

In man, the variety both of stimulus and response is yet greater. But it is no longer determined by the bodily organism. A man can inhibit an instinctive activity, though the impulse to it be felt: when angry, the expression of anger in frowning, clenching the fists, or striking a blow, may be repressed. The important element in human instinct is not automatic response to some definite element in the situation, but the emotional propulsion which underlies every such tendency and which can be turned into other channels.

Moreover, as active factors in the whole personality, instincts and disposition in union with intelligence become progressively organized into complex emotions, wide-reaching sentiments, permanent attractions or passions, and dominant interests. From the instinct of self-affirmation spring all impulses to enrich and enlarge our lives by assimilating elements from our surroundings. From that of sympathy—seen in its primitive form in parental love—develops the inspiration to help our fellows. And these unite. We grow spiritually by assimilating the spiritual lives of others, and by giving our spiritual lives to be assimilated by them. So welcome to pursue common ends with other members of the various communities in which we live.

Among the more definite promptings of instinct are the bodily appetites. These, too, are manifestations of the fundamental striving of life. Each calls for the attainment of something immediately conducive to its preservation. Both the felt need and its satisfaction are transitory. It is not long after hunger is satisfied that it is felt anew. Simi-

larly, exertion induces need for rest, but in rest the bodily energy is accumulated afresh, and the impulsion to activity again becomes assertive. All appetites and all satisfactions of appetite are recurrent.

These needs are constant in life, and are important because they are connected with intense and pervasive organic sensations. Our personality is at once spirit and body, and the needs of the latter when unsatisfied become imperative calls to which we cannot but respond.

(ii) DESIRE.

(a) *Nature*.—The propulsive force of instinct and disposition transfused with understanding is seen in desire. Desire implies a felt need, the nature of which and of what will satisfy it is more or less clearly apprehended; the impossibility of the immediate satisfaction of that need; and the underlying propulsion towards satisfaction manifested in a present consciousness of uneasiness and unrest.

The whole of the motive-power in desire is never in clear consciousness. It derives its strength mainly from the general impulsive force of life seeking satisfaction. In each desire some partial satisfaction is in view, but this is only an element in that complex tendency. We desire partial satisfactions because they are dimly felt to be related to the needs of life as a whole, and we often feel a kind of vague desire, which by meditation may clarify and define itself more or less completely.

(b) *Range*.—The possible range of desires is as wide as that of experience. Any instinctive prompting may give rise to desire, and such promptings may refer to any piece of experience. Every prompting is a felt need for some form of activity, and if the activity is impossible at the time, desire awakes. It is not restricted to the familiar. That may fail to satisfy us, and a vague unrest arises which may define itself in a multitude of different desires. Many of these when gratified fail to give satisfaction. They are

“ Like to the apples on the Dead Sea's shore,
All ashes to the taste.”¹

Yet such experiences are not empty: they elucidate desire and help both to restrict it in range and to define it in character.

Desires are impulsive forces within us. But, as each originates in some special feeling of need and is directed towards its satisfaction, no desire expresses the full personality. They are, however, of very various degrees of generality, for the needs we experience are not of equal importance to the whole self. There are small and transient desires, such as a child's desire for an apple; there are wide-reaching desires, such as an adult's desire for holiness or for knowledge; and there are desires of all degrees of scope between such extremes.

(c) *Systematization*.—Now, directly a desire looks for satisfaction beyond this or that simple experience it shows itself as a system of desires, each of which marks a step towards satisfaction of the whole desire. For example, the desire for knowledge operates in many sub-desires to study this or that subject. Each of these is in the same way a system finding expression in desires to learn particular portions of that subject. So we go on indefinitely, finding under the dominance of each far-reaching desire a whole hierarchy of desires, till we get down to the desire to do now this or that little particular thing. But the little thing would have no value for us, be no object of desire at all, if it were not part of a system. It is in the progressive satisfaction of the system of desires that we hope to find satisfaction for the self.

(d) *Conflict*.—It would be evident theoretically, and we all know practically, that desires may come into conflict. We can do only one thing at a time and we are often prompted by desire to do more than one. The wide desire for study may be in conflict at any moment with a desire for bodily

¹ Byron: *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, Canto III., st. xxxiv.

exercise or for some other form of sensuous gratification. Shall I read Plato or shall I go to a concert, play a game of golf, or lie and bask in the sun? Nor in such cases do we always weigh the relative worth to us of the alternatives. We often yield to one of the desires without any deliberate decision. That desire then proves itself the strongest by carrying the day against its competitors. But its strength is never simply in itself. It is the strength of the whole system of which it is at the moment the representative. If I have for a long time closely confined myself to intellectual work and failed to satisfy the calls of the body for relaxation and exercise, the system of bodily desires may prevail. Or if I have been starving my æsthetic cravings for music, that system may awake in force and carry the day. But if I have had a reasonable amount of both bodily and æsthetic recreation in the recent past, then the system of desires directed towards knowledge will prevail if it is usually dominant with me.

Thus, struggle between desires is always between systems of desires, and the strength of a system depends generally on its width and organization, for organization of a system means formation of habits of action by which it is carried out. But at any one time a system may acquire adventitious strength through having been long repressed.

3. Purpose.

(i) RELATION TO DESIRE.—In so far as desire looks towards an end to be striven for it partakes of the nature of purpose. But it is not purpose till the end has been consciously accepted by the self as the goal of endeavour. Desire is simply the prompting, and that prompting we may reject or adopt. If we adopt it the desire is still felt, but it is now not simply an impulse. It is an impulse definitely accepted by the self and directed towards an end.

Our wider desires are thus commonly organized under

purposes, and a system of desires is held together by the accepted purpose. So it is that inward struggle is usually not between systems of mere desire but between such systems related to purposes of different scope and worth, and held in the mind with various degrees of clearness. Desires for study are organized by the purpose to enrich our lives by knowledge, and such a purpose has been deliberately adopted. On the other hand desires for bodily enjoyment make for the preservation of health and the development of our physical nature. But this end may be only implicit in consciousness. Then the struggle is between a definite purpose and the indefinite tendency towards the maintenance of life which underlies all desire, but is not always made the subject of will.

To allow a struggle of desires to settle itself is to put the power of self-determination in abeyance. The action which follows is free only in the lower sense that we have refrained from inhibiting it, not in the higher sense that we deliberately choose to do it. The latter implies the whole process of deliberation ending in a resolution to do this rather than that; that is, to follow out some definite purpose.

(ii) **RELATION TO ACTION.**—If the conduct decided upon can be begun at once the resolution immediately passes into action. But it may be that we resolve to do something in the future, and then it is a common experience that the resolution is not always carried out. When the time comes we may find that the actual circumstances are different from our anticipation of them, or that our estimate of the situation has changed. We often feel that second thoughts are best. If this means a weakening of purpose, again we abdicate our freedom. But if, while the general purpose remains intact, we see good cause to carry it out by means different from those we had resolved to use, then that resolution is not a bar to our freedom. It expressed the estimate we formerly formed of the situation, but it does not so petrify the self that intervening experiences do not affect it. So when the time for action

arrives we may resolve to discard the former resolution. It is only when the act is done that the resolution to do it is irrevocable.

4. Voluntary Action.

(i) VALUATION OF END.—Not in resolution by itself, then, but in resolution carried into act, do we find volition; which is the energy with which an agent throws himself into the line of conduct he has chosen. For all such acts we are responsible in the fullest degree, as in them we act most freely. The totality of these is properly called *Conduct*. So every piece of conduct expresses our character as it is at the moment of action; that is, as holding in itself a definite purpose. The act may be different from what our previous character may have suggested as probable. The resolving to do it modifies that character, and the modification may be inappreciable or it may be profound. When the self acts, it acts as an organized will. That is essentially what is meant by character.

Every voluntary act has reference to some definite situation. It aims at producing some change in that situation, and thus securing an end judged to be of value. To attain this end is the immediate purpose with which the act is done. So a purpose is a forecast; a representation in idea of something which in that form does not yet exist, but which is to be brought into existence by the action. The end is sought because it is believed to be of worth. In deliberation the apparent value of each suggested end is weighed, and that end which seems of highest value is chosen. All purposes, therefore, express valuation, and valuation has direct reference to personality.

Often our own personality is chiefly, if not exclusively, in question. But not always. We form purposes to seek the good of others, especially of those who are dear to us. Affection prompts us in the same way, but valuation is more

than affection in that it involves deliberation as to what is really for their good. Affection often leads a fond parent to injure a child by indulgence of its every whim; valuation considers the effect on personality of each course of action and recognizes the worth of wholesome discipline. Similarly, valuation of what concerns ourselves looks to the enrichment of our whole personality, not simply to immediate gratification.

(ii) **MOTIVE.**—The end, then, is seen in idea, and is estimated as of worth. Such estimation implies a relation to those dynamic forces which we speak of generically as feeling, passion, affection, emotion, sentiment, interest, according to their degrees of permanence and strength. This active power is bound up with the end to be attained. Through valuation the end is taken up by the feelings, and the whole self in action is a unitary force directed to this end and deriving impetus from the feelings excited. We can distinguish the factors in our thought, but if we regard the results of such analysis as independent realities in temporary relation to each other we make a fundamental mistake. The will is not like a mechanical point impressed towards an external end by external forces, but is the whole self in action. That action is both directed by the idea of the end present in it, and made real by the purposive force which is its very being. The moving force—or motive—of an action is in itself; that is, in the personality acting. It is not the intellectual picture of the end, nor is it the feeling or emotion which impels. The former lacks propulsive power, the latter directive power. What moves us to action is the apprehension of the whole situation and of the way in which it can be turned to account so as to yield some element of value.

Valuation and motivation are, therefore, intimately connected. As Professor James Ward says: "Both presuppose feeling; but, whereas valuation is concerned with the object

or situation that causes the feeling, motivation is concerned with the actions to which the feeling prompts. The subject is the real ground of both, of the first as affected, of the second as active. . . . We may distinguish valuation and motivation in conduct as readily as we distinguish sides and angles in a triangle, but in neither case can we resolve the whole into two separable parts."¹

The motive, then, is always complex. Some element, indeed, is often prominent, and popular speech is apt to identify that element with the whole motive, as when it is said that the motive to a certain act or course of conduct is revenge or avarice. But such passions seek many outlets, and so are among the moving forces of many actions. Yet they are never the whole motive of any one of them, for each is related to a definite situation, and has, therefore, its own specific character.

(iii) END AND MEANS.—To secure an end certain means must be taken; that is, a line of action laid out in anticipation and followed in reality. This is part of the action willed. Indeed, while occupied with the means the will must be directed to them. So they become subordinate ends. This is very evident when the end is a wide one only to be realized in a long course of time; as the amassing of a fortune, or the development of a certain capacity. Then the general purpose becomes implicit, and the subordinate ends occupy the whole attention. To the attainment of these subordinate ends also, means are necessary.

In the inner life means taken and end realized cannot be separated. The means are successive phases in one process of which the final stage is the end attained. For example, all the means taken to develop musical capacity are progressive developments of that capacity; the means adopted to secure wealth, strengthen the estimation of wealth.

¹ *Psychological Principles*, p. 399.

Here a difference is obvious. In the former case the end desired is intrinsic—to *become* something: in the latter case it is extrinsic—to *get* something. The relation of means to end sought in the former is community of nature; in the latter it is mechanical. Yet the means always lead to their own intrinsic result. If a man adopt dishonest means to the attainment of wealth, the personal end to which they are intrinsically related will be realized. This is deterioration of character. In willing the means, the agent shuts his eyes to this inevitable result, and fixes his desires on the enjoyment wealth may bring. He does evil to attain what he deems good, but his judgement of the good is a mistaken one, in that it omits the very elements which are most vital to him personally.

So in all cases. The doing of evil entails evil consequences in the character of the agent, and that quite apart from the effects of his conduct on others. Out of evil comes evil. On the other hand, good conduct has good results on character in addition to being means to an external good. Beneficent action increases the benevolence of the agent as well as benefits those who are affected by it. In every case "the end justifies the means" in the inner life, for means taken and end realized are essentially one in kind. It is when the end sought is external that the phrase has a sinister implication, for between that end and the end actually attained in the inner life there is no necessary community of nature.

(iv) CONSEQUENCES.—This makes evident that every action has consequences in the spiritual life, and that these may be other than the end on the attainment of which the will is set. It has also external consequences. A voluntary action is the setting into operation of an active force which as it progresses operates in an ever-widening circle. As the activity has to take place in the world of men and things, it affects other people both directly and indirectly, and brings

into play many series of physical forces. Its consequences are theoretically illimitable, though many of them may be disregarded as morally indifferent. Some of them may be foreseen, others are unforeseen. Of those which he does foresee the agent may approve some, regret others, and be indifferent to the rest.

The first class includes all that came into the picture of the end sought. There may be other consequences also which he anticipates with satisfaction though he adopts his purposes independently of them. Obviously, foreseen results of the last two classes did not enter into his motive. Yet all foreseen consequences are necessarily accepted when the decision to adopt the line of conduct is made. The agent *intends* to bring them about even though he may regard them as unavoidable evils. So distinction must be drawn between motive and intention, the latter including anticipated results which do not enter into the former.

5. Moral Judgement.

(i) OBJECT.—There has been much controversy as to which of the elements revealed by analysis in voluntary action is the proper object of judgements of approval and disapproval. Some have said the simple will to act well or ill, irrespective both of consequences and of the moving forces of feeling; others the end sought; others the intention, or foreseen results; others the whole of the actual consequences. Of these, the two former may be dismissed as partial and inadequate; the two latter, and especially the last, as not merely inadequate but really irrelevant, as they disregard the character of the agent. For always the agent in the actual action is the object of approval or disapproval.

This is our experience when we judge our own conduct. We look at the whole, and defect in any element is condemned. As the great mediaeval doctor St. Thomas Aquinas put it: "For a thing to be evil, one single defect

suffices: but for a thing to be absolutely good, one single good point suffices not, but there is required an entirety of goodness."¹

(ii) LIMITATIONS.—There is no need to labour the point that we are seldom able to pronounce a judgement of absolute goodness on our own conduct. We can only approve or disapprove in various degrees. So the moral judgement is one of degree, and not simply one of kind, as good or bad, right or wrong. Nor can we lay bare, even in careful retrospection, all the elements which entered into our conduct, of many of which we were but vaguely aware.

If this is so with ourselves, it is true in an accentuated degree of our attempts to judge others. A parent has to pronounce judgement on the conduct of a child, and if wise, will attempt first to understand that conduct as fully as possible. What has been done may be regrettable as an external event, but condemnation may be profoundly modified by even a partial insight into the state of mind which led to the action. Even a legal tribunal, which is essentially concerned with the agreement of action with external law, cannot wholly disregard motive and circumstances, but distinguishes, for example, between murder, manslaughter, and justifiable homicide. Yet, even so, legal judgements are not moral judgements; they deal with relations of conduct to external law, not with relations of agent to the internal law of right. It follows that even when our relation to the agent compels us to pass moral judgement, that judgement must always be to some extent hypothetical, and that when we are not bound to judge, the only safe rule is "Judge not."

(iii) RELATION TO UNFORESEEN CONSEQUENCES.—The question of how far unforeseen consequences should be taken into account is in practice a difficult one. In so far as

¹ *Summa Theologica*, Pt. II., Div. I., Qxx. Art. 2.

we did not foresee them we cannot hold ourselves directly responsible for them. But we cannot stop here, for often we did not foresee them because we did not wish to do so. Prejudice, or a strong attraction to the course of action is apt to blind the eyes. In such cases ignorance is not involuntary and unavoidable. The fact that the consequences were not foreseen does not remove responsibility for them if greater care and a more open mind would have made them clear. So emerges the important practical truth that in voluntary action we should try to get as much insight as possible into all the circumstances. We must not be satisfied with the assurance of a general intention to do right; as dispassionately as we can, we must consider the case in all its bearings. That in persecuting the Christians Saul of Tarsus meant to do God service did not justify his action in his own eyes when he reviewed it after his conversion had made its real character clear to his understanding.

6. **Organization of Purposes.**

(i) **RANGE OF PURPOSES.**—Purpose is directly known in experience. We form purposes daily. Some are unimportant, and both easily attained and easily forgotten; as, for example, a purpose to close a window when one feels a draught, or to refer to an encyclopaedia for a piece of information required at the moment. Others are wide in scope, and their attainment is possible only after months or years of effort; as, for instance, the purpose to write a book. Others, again, are not only wide but more or less indefinite; as a purpose to gain fame, to win a high position in the literary, the social, or the political world, to develop a certain capacity or type of character.

The narrow immediate purposes are of little importance; they are merely incidental in life. It is the wider purposes which at once show what we are and determine what we shall become. For each of these is not a simple deter-

minant of one piece of action, but a system coordinating and subordinating desires and activities into conduct of a definite type. The smaller purposes directly determine what we do; the wider purposes are present as general directors, but determine only indirectly most of the acts through which they are fulfilled. Indeed, they are but occasionally in full consciousness. Having been accepted as ends of action they have become elements in that deeper personality of which all that appears in consciousness is a partial manifestation. One may dwell in thought on such a purpose only occasionally, but it is a permanent and potent influence both on what one thinks about and on how one employs one's time. It takes up and converts to its own use all kinds of elements from daily experience; it rules the adoption of smaller purposes, subordinates them to itself and relates them to each other; it is ever pressing forward to its complete realization. For example, if one purposes to write a book, one's range of reading, one's habits of thought, one's use of one's time, must all be related to it, or it will be but an empty dream.

(ii) HINDRANCES.—There are both external and internal hindrances to the persistent following of such purposes. In a busy age the temptation to live for the moment is strong. Men and women give themselves up to their business and their pleasures; they are wholly engrossed by the many claims made on them by the world in which they live. Much in their nature gives the same prompting. Bodily appetites are insistent, especially in those early years in which the chains of habit are forged. To one engrossed in the calls of the moment they give constant impulses to action. So time is not found for thought or feeling disconnected with the immediate present, and interest gradually narrows down to what makes directly for material well-being.

There is reason to fear that such practical materialism is

the implicit guide of life of many who would shrink from the explicit statement that gratification of appetite and care for bodily well-being should be dominant in life.

(iii) **NEED FOR WIDE PURPOSES.**—Such a narrowing of the interests of life is a mutilation of life, and a mutilated life cannot yield an un mutilated satisfaction. The constant gratification of sensuous impulses leads to satiety, and as life advances there is progressively decreasing capacity to enjoy them. Moreover, the whole of the human nature which is not directly related to the bodily life, though starved, is not killed. It still calls for satisfaction, though its call may become increasingly inarticulate. So it makes the man uneasy and dissatisfied, without any clear indication of the cause of the inward trouble. Even if that cause be recognized, the arousing to effective activity of capacities atrophied by long disuse is a task calling for powers of decision and effort which the whole of the previous life has weakened.

To be so absorbed in the details of living as to give little or no thought to the character of the life as a whole is, then, a sure way to fail in attaining that satisfaction and peace which our nature impels us to seek, and which alone deserves to be called well-being or happiness or good.

Thought on experience, then, makes clear the importance of wide purposes which look beyond the present and seek to bring into the life elements of permanent value. But we cannot stop here. Wide purposes, as well as narrow ones, need to be related till life is systematized by all its aims being brought under one ruling purpose. This gives strength to character, for all conduct is then related to one all-embracing end.

(iv) **VALUE OF PURPOSES.**—Yet a character should be good as well as strong, and this depends on the nature of the dominant purpose. If this concerns the individual alone, life is narrowed and mutilated. For personality is

social as well as individual. We are all members of many communities, each with its common life and aims. As they are constant parts of our surroundings our purposes must have some reference to them. If we regard them simply as means to our own advantage or improvement, the whole of the social side of our nature is starved, our emotional life becomes thin and barren, our interests are narrowed. If, on the contrary, we throw ourselves into the wider interests of the social groups of which we are members, our purposes gain in warmth and consistency. The wider aim has a grandeur which far surpasses the valuations of a private individual life. We gain, too, in power as we benefit by the active cooperation of our fellows. So, not only when viewed from without, but also when regarded from within as a means to enrichment and efficiency of the inner life, it is apparent that an ultimate purpose which shall systematize the whole of life must be wide enough to embrace not only our whole private nature but all our relations to our fellows.

CHAPTER V.

VALUATION.

1. **Consciousness of Valuation.**

(i) **IMPORTANCE OF VALUATION.**—We have reached the position that the character of a life is determined by the nature of its purposes. But purpose ever springs from valuation of the end sought. A purpose is adopted because the end to which it is directed is believed to be worth achieving. So character expresses systematic valuation, related to the main aim of life, which inspires the dominant purpose to which all others are explicitly or implicitly related.

But, as has been seen, valuation is an attitude of the whole personality. It is the estimation the individual places upon the relation of his surroundings to the needs of his nature. Hence, the success of a life in satisfying those needs depends on the soundness of its valuations. Gigantic intellect, luxuriant imagination, consummate skill, may give the scholar, the inventor, the artist, the poet, the proficient craftsman. But the man is more than any of these. Intellect, imagination, skill, may be used for narrow and evil ends; science can be applied in destruction as easily as in construction, art and literature may deck vice in attractive colours. Not capacity, but use made of capacity, is the standard of human worth. People differ in both kind and degree of capacity as well as in the opportunities their lives present of exercising their capacities. But the purpose which determines what use shall

be made of capacity and opportunity is a matter, not simply nor primarily of capacity and opportunity, but of valuation.

(ii) FALLIBILITY OF VALUATION.—Valuation is thus seen to be a constant element in experience. But experience also shows that the estimates made are often erroneous. The satisfaction when gained may prove transient and partial, and may tend to impoverishment instead of enrichment of life. Under a sense of injury, revenge may be sweet, but its pursuit is antagonistic to those wider relations of sympathy without which personality shrinks and withers. So the revengeful man suffers a loss which far outweighs the gratification of his passion. Subsequent experience often brings home that what has been desired was not desirable, that what has been loved was not worthy of love. Wasted opportunities are recognized by all, and wasted lives are not unknown.

(iii) DIVERGENCIES OF VALUATION.—Moreover, it is notorious that people have various dominating purposes, related to different valuations of objects of endeavour. Riches, honour, power, pleasure, art, knowledge, saintliness, are all ends to the attainment of which the activities of life are made contributory. Doubtless, in many cases the end is adopted without much consideration. It is assumed as a matter of course in the society in which the individual lives most intimately, and is often little more than a reflexion in his consciousness of public opinion. By no means always so. Sometimes instead of reflexion there is reaction. A family which regards wealth with reverential admiration may produce a spendthrift; a prodigal may issue from a religious home. Innate tendencies to value most highly this or that kind of experience are often stronger than precept and example. Here, again, however, there may be nothing which deserves to be called deliberate and rational choice of end. The ruling of life may be left to the interaction of instinct and circumstance, and the end practically sought be sensuous gratification.

2. **Standard of Valuation.**

(i) **NEED FOR A STANDARD.**—Examination of experience, then, brings out the facts that valuation is a constant fact in life, that it is not infrequently erroneous, and that people differ not merely in their estimates of value in minor matters, which might well result from differences in capacity and opportunity, but in their estimate of what is best worth seeking in life as a whole—of what most surely renders life worth living.

It is evident that this raises the most important question a man or woman can ask. Everyone desires to secure the greatest possible good, to make life as full and satisfying as possible, to play his part in the world as effectively as he can. Nobody desires to fail in life. But success depends on right valuation. Choice has to be made between alternative, and more or less discrepant, ends. That this demands thought and deliberation in daily matters of business and occupation is practically acknowledged by everybody. Surely the conduct of life as a whole cannot require less. The most important question for every person is whether the course he is pursuing is one in which on the whole life becomes fuller, richer, and more satisfying; in other words, whether what is most valued most deserves to be valued. Thus, both for wise choice in minor matters and for sane direction of life as a whole, a standard of value is required.

Such a standard cannot be found in likings and dislikings, which express very partial activities of the self, and are subject to constant change as life goes on. This, indeed, is commonly recognized. 'I like it, but I know it is not good for me' is a not unusual verdict on articles of food. But it is an equally possible one in all relations of our lives.

Nor can the standard be found in desire. We do not value a thing because we desire it. On the contrary, in general we desire what we value. Yet this relation is not invariable. It is not uncommon to recognize that a thing is good without

desiring it. A dishonest man may acknowledge the worth of honesty, or a lazy man admire industry, without being moved by desire to practise those virtues. On the other hand, what is recognized as bad may still excite desire, especially when continued gratification has given it the propulsive force of habit. A reformed drunkard may still experience the desire for drink, though he may acknowledge the evil of indulgence.

(ii) GROUND.—The common judgement of civilized mankind condemns the preference of the dishonest or the lazy man, not merely as mistaken so far as concerns himself or as inconvenient to his fellows, but as wrong in itself; and it approves the struggle of the converted drunkard to resist the promptings of his desire for excessive drinking, and of the idler to overcome his cultivated inertia, not only as beneficial to himself and to the community, but as right in itself.

Examination of experience thus shows further that it is recognized that the standard of value is independent of personal likings and desires; that it is universal, or valid for all. Such universal validity can be based only in relation to human life as such; that is, irrespective of the special form that life shows in any individual case. Enormously as people differ in personality, all are variations of a common humanity. That is rightly judged good which aids the growth of that humanity towards perfection; in other words, which contributes to full and unalloyed satisfaction of the needs of that life.

We have seen that human life as such is at once spiritual and bodily, and that the spiritual is the dominant element. So, in a perfect life bodily satisfaction is ancillary to spiritual satisfaction, and that is unalloyed by regret for partial failure. To that ideal the best and most successful life actually led can only approximate, but the nearness of the approximation is the measure of its worth as a human life.

At the same time it must be remembered that no one lives simply a general human life. Each has to work out his own

salvation with a certain individual personality and in circumstances peculiar to himself. Thus, perfection of life is approached in many ways and shows itself in many forms. Yet these all agree in the characteristic that the conception of what is good, and, therefore, rightly to be valued, is one in essence though diverse in manifestation.

3. **Intrinsic and Instrumental Value.**

(i) **NATURE OF DISTINCTION.**—If we now go on to consider the valuations we actually make, we are led to an important distinction. Comparison of such experiences shows that not only do we estimate some things as of greater worth than others, but that to some the standard of good is applied directly in that we value them for their own sakes, to others indirectly in that we value them for the sake of something else. In other words, while our ends have absolute value, the means to those ends have only relative value. We set up an end to be sought because we esteem it as good in itself, as having *intrinsic* value. But we approve the means because they will lead to that end; their value is *instrumental*.

For example, one who esteems proficiency in playing the piano worth possessing for its own sake will labour at scales and other formal exercises which, so far from having intrinsic value for him are in themselves indifferent or even repellent. They call forth his effort because he sees them to be valuable as means to the end he desires to attain. Their value is wholly instrumental. >

(ii) **DEVELOPMENT OF VALUE.**—Other means to the desired end, however, may have intrinsic as well as instrumental value. A sonata of Beethoven or a nocturne of Chopin is worth learning for its own sake, and is also a means through which skill in playing is developed. But its intrinsic value is related to the wide end of cultivation of musical capacity. None would attempt to learn either who did not value that end. The wide end is attainable only through a system of

subordinate ends, all of which are also means. Each of these while it is the object of endeavour is an end on which attention must be concentrated. The wide purpose to attain the ultimate end is the force determining the making of the effort, but its realization is sought through the immediate ends. Moreover, with attainment of the immediate ends the conception of the ultimate end gains both in fullness and in precision. As executive skill in playing grows, the range of possibilities is progressively enlarged.

This is the general history of human progress. Something esteemed of worth is sought, and the process of attaining it opens out ever-widening vistas. The valuation of the original end becomes more explicit as it is seen to involve more than had hitherto been apprehended. For example, doubtless men first valued knowledge simply as instrumental in the carrying out of practical purposes. But as that end was more and more fully realized, leisure became possible. No longer fully occupied with bodily cares, men discovered that successful intellectual activity has a value in itself, as satisfying an innate craving which had hitherto not been disentangled from the general striving for an intelligible practical end. Without losing instrumental value, knowledge was increasingly estimated as of intrinsic worth. Similarly with the gradual evolution of art. And it need only be pointed out that progress in invention has ever consisted in taking the end sought in the past as means towards new achievements in the future.

(iii) **IMPORTANCE OF THE DISTINCTION.**—Means and end, therefore, are not absolute terms in unchanging relation. In continued activity each is implicated in the other. Nevertheless, the distinction is of considerable importance. At the time of action, end and means are always separable in the mind of the agent. Valuation is primarily of the end. So the same kind of action may be differently judged according to the kind of end to which it is means. In earlier centuries

a prisoner after torture was often nursed back to such health as was possible, in order that he might be submitted more effectively to fresh torture. We judge such care as of very different moral value from that given to the sick and injured in a hospital. Similarly, a man may give lavishly to charities or other public objects, but we regard his conduct very differently when the apparent object is to gain votes at a coming election or to secure a peerage from what we do when it is simply to do good to his fellows.

The great practical mistake of materialism is the confusion of instrumental with intrinsic value. Men use material things as instruments in securing personal ends. In themselves those things have no independent value. Wealth would be worthless unless through its agency the rich man could secure some personal good for himself or for those whom he desires to benefit. Honour and fame are empty words save in so far as they satisfy personal cravings and are felt to be deserved by personal action.

Thus, many of the dominant ends actually sought by men have no intrinsic worth, but are really, by their very nature, means. Such confusion is apt to spell disaster. For, as was seen in the last chapter, every act done as a means to the attainment of an external end, such as wealth, has also an internal effect in modification of character, and that effect will be realized even though it be not desired.¹ Deterioration of aims and valuations is too often the unregarded side of a life wholly or mainly devoted to the pursuit of material ends. The confusion between instrumental and intrinsic value revenges itself.

4. Judgements of Value.

(i) CHARACTER.—Whatever appears to have a positive value for personality as making for perfection of life is judged

¹ See pp. 57-58.

to be intrinsically good. This affirms that it has a universal quality which is as immediately perceived as are those universal qualities of things which are apprehended by the senses. It is no more possible to analyse 'good' than to analyse 'sweet' or 'blue.' These are all ultimate ideas, due to an immediate relation between the object and the self. So 'good' is simply good, and nothing but confusion can result from any attempt to explain good by reference to some other idea, such as 'pleasant,' or 'useful,' or 'desirable.' It is true that, in the deepest sense, the good is all of these; but the goodness is the ground of the pleasantness, the utility, or the desirableness, not a consequence of the presence of those qualities.

Nor is it true that the relation is a universal one empirically. In actual experience that which is esteemed pleasant, or useful, or desirable, is not always good; nor does what is good always seem to us at the moment to possess either of those qualities. It is only with reference to life as a whole that the relations hold, and it strains unduly the significance of the terms to say the good is always recognized as pleasant or useful or desirable. The desired is not always what should be desired as desirable in itself, nor does that which makes for true happiness, or the satisfaction of life as a whole, and is, consequently in the fullest sense useful, always so appear to the person who tries to estimate its value.

(ii) **GENERAL JUDGEMENTS.**—When we consider the great objects to which endeavour is directed, we find that those which are spiritual are undoubtedly good. All normal people agree that such things as happiness, wisdom, beauty, and moral excellence, are good in themselves, and their opposites evil. No reason outside themselves can be given why they are so estimated. It is not an inference from something else, but an immediate apprehension of the nature of their relation to that human life in which all mankind shares. These are self-evident truths, like the axioms of geometry or the postu-

lates of logic. Their ground is in themselves, not in anything external to them.

Nevertheless, self-evidence does not involve universal recognition. 'Self-evident' does not mean 'evident to all men,' but that it is meaningless to ask why the statement is true. It is only when its terms are clearly and correctly understood that the self-evidence of such a proposition appears. Misinterpretation of their true significance leads to its enunciation in a form in which the truth is by no means self-evident, and may, indeed, be wholly lacking. As will be seen in the next chapter, this has been markedly the case with the proposition 'Happiness is the supreme good.'

(iii) PARTICULAR JUDGEMENTS.—Rightly interpreted, then, judgements that the great spiritual objects of life are good are self-evident. But such judgements are theoretical. In actual life we are called upon to estimate the character of the ends offered us in actual concrete situations. The widest goods are embodied in specific forms. On these also the judgement of value is an immediate one, similar to judgements of sense perception. In the one case, as in the other, error is possible. One may mistake one person for another, or even take clothes hanging from a peg for a man. So one may esteem good that which is evil, and take for evil that which is good. Illusion is possible in the sphere of spiritual perception as it is in that of sensuous perception. The situation may be misinterpreted as to what it is worth as well as to what it is.

For in perception there is always an implicit inference, so immediate as to be unconscious till its result is challenged. Then we must ask ourselves on what grounds the judgement was made. If our immediate recognition of an individual proves to be mistaken and the supposed friend turns out to be really a stranger, we find the ground of the error in the acceptance of some elements of similarity for complete identity. Similarly, if an immediate judgement of value is shown

by experience to have been erroneous, if what was taken for good turns out to be evil, the error originates in misapprehension of the actual situation.

An illusion of sense perception is rectified by more accurate examination of the object perceived. So illusions of valuation are rectified by more careful analysis of the situation with which we have to deal. Often we find that there has been no real valuation at all, but simply a following of impulse or a habitual and largely automatic reaction to some part of the whole situation, the real nature of which has not been laid bare. The mistaken valuation expresses a relation of a portion of the self to some external element of experience, not the relation of the whole self to the complete situation in which we find ourselves.

Nevertheless, the possibility of error in either case is no warrant for general scepticism. We are more often right than wrong, and the more careful we are to make sure of the facts, the more frequently is our judgement justified. Experience of illusion teaches the importance of caution, not the worthlessness of our immediate judgements whether of fact or of valuation.

(iv) **APPROVAL AND DISAPPROVAL.**—Towards a judgement of fact our attitude is not one of passive receptivity but of active acceptance or rejection, or of deliberate postponement for further evidence. There is an equally active attitude towards judgements of value. But in this case the intellectual attitude is infused with a much stronger element of feeling. We approve or we disapprove. As was seen in the last chapter, valuation is rooted in the feelings but is not limited to them. It is an activity of the whole personality. So approval and disapproval are at once emotional, intellectual, and volitional. To approve a proposed end as good is to feel satisfaction in the idea of its realization and an impulse to try to accomplish it; to approve suggested means as right implies the desire to carry them out. This is what is meant

by loving the good, for though wider in application, the attitude is of the same general character as loving a person.

5. **Preference.**

(i) **PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE.**—On the ground of judgements of good and evil are based those of better and worse. It is common experience that we are often faced by two or more alternatives, of none of which by itself can we say 'It is bad!' Each of the imagined ends may be approved, as each, taken by itself, is perceived to be good. They are incompatible only because both cannot be sought simultaneously. It is good to be loyal to the Government and it is good to save life. But, as in the case of Mrs. Lisle when some fugitives from Monmouth's army sought refuge with her, the two may be incompatible in the circumstances.

In any one situation only one course is right. The lesser good if sought at the expense of the greater becomes relatively evil. Nor is life painted for us in simple white and black, but rather in many intermediate shades of grey.

In such cases the choice is not between what is inherently absolutely good, and what is by nature absolutely bad, but between a better and a worse. The question of the ground on which the preference should be based is one of great practical importance, for such moral puzzles are by no means rare.

As in other cases of conflict between aims, the decision may be made impulsively, or may be determined by habit. What one has been accustomed to prefer one is likely to prefer on each new occasion.

Again, it is often an immediate judgement, like a judgement of perceptive comparison, such as 'This is longer than that.' But in both cases the ground of the judgement is in the actual relation of the objects to each other. By explicit reference to that the judgement is confirmed or refuted. It is when that relation is not immediately apparent that, in the

one case as in the other, precise and deliberate examination is required.

In judgements of comparative value the relation to be examined is the degree to which each alternative strengthens and enriches spiritual life. One aim, or one line of conduct is rightly preferable to another when it more fully realizes what is good for that life. But, again, it is not in relation to the empirical self with its more or less accidental likings and desires, but in relation to the deeper and truer self which is the universal human life in each individual, that the standard of right preference is to be found. The ground of right preference, like the ground of intrinsic good, is independent of every individual. That a man may prefer prize-fighting to philosophy, or a woman the adornment of her body to the enrichment of her soul, is no evidence that the preference is justified. The value of literature and art is unaffected by defect of taste among the majority of mankind; the worth of probity and honour is not lessened by the dishonesty of thieves. Even bad men commonly pay lip-service to goodness. It is by relation to human life in its entirety that relative values are to be measured.

(ii) GROUNDS OF PREFERENCE.

(a) *Duration*.—It is evident that, as a greater good is always preferable to a lesser, so, other things being equal, a good which endures is better than one which is transitory. It is better to be happy for a year than for a day, an assured competence is preferable to alternations of wealth and poverty, a life-long friend adds more value to life than many pleasant but transitory acquaintances.

This shows again the superiority of spiritual over material goods. Wealth may vanish or health decay, but wisdom and virtue remain unaffected by such vicissitudes. We may lose what we have, but not what we have become.

(b) *Attainability*.—From the practical point of view of conduct, nothing can be of value to anybody which is out of

his reach. Beauty is a good in proportion to aesthetic capacity; the hearing of the finest music most perfectly rendered is not valued by one who has no musical taste.

Further, the attainment of some goods depends on favourable external conditions, and the securing them is not altogether within the power of anybody, and is largely, or altogether, out of the power of many. For example, every form of aesthetic capacity requires for its development and refinement frequent experience of artistic products. This takes much time. Moreover, pictures and sculpture are costly to acquire, and if open to contemplation in public galleries and museums are, like exquisite music, confined to few localities. So that enrichment of life to any considerable extent by most forms of art is possible only to a minority of mankind.

To a less extent the same holds true of knowledge. Though schools and books have been so largely multiplied in late years, yet the life of the student demands a continued and untroubled leisure and an expenditure on books and other instruments of learning which are possible only to those who have a sufficient and assured income.

As the main purpose of life, then, pursuit of knowledge or devotion to art is placed out of the reach of most people by external circumstances. And it is sufficiently obvious that were all such hindrances removed, want of taste and capacity would put out of the question such ordering of life for the majority of men and women; though, of course, either knowledge or art may enter into any of those lives as a subordinate and occasional end.

Attainability, then, is a matter both of capacity and of circumstances. But what is wholly or largely out of the reach of many, through lack of power, cannot be related to universal human nature as the good which should be preferred before all others. What is essential to the spiritual growth of all must respond to a need of all. The response must be not to a special capacity, as that for learning or for

art, but to a general capacity to respond in the best way to each and every demand of life. And this capacity is moral. Doubtless, like all else in personality, it is of different strength and efficiency in different people; moral ability, like every other form of ability, is the product of the original nature and the amount and kind of cultivation it has received. But to deal with every situation that arises in the best way he can discern is within the competence of each human being.

(c) *Breadth*.—This brings us to a further legitimate ground of preference—the fullness with which a good calls out the activities of the whole self. That which satisfies an extensive system of desires is better than that which gratifies a passing impulse; that which aids the fulfilment of a wide purpose is better than that which is related to a narrow one. But it has been seen that, as life becomes more perfect, purposes are increasingly systematized and taken up into the general volitional trend of the life to seek some one form of good. It follows that that good is the best which inspires the purpose which takes up into itself the most of life.

The relative intrinsic values of ends are found, then, in the values of the systems they represent. And every such system is organic; that is, it is infused with life, and the worth of each part depends on its functional relation to the whole. Consequently, the value of such a system cannot be calculated by summing the values of the parts. Joy, by itself, is a good thing, but joy in a malicious act makes the whole act worse. On the other hand, sorrow in itself is an evil, and misfortune and sin are also evils. But sorrow for the misfortunes of others or for personal sin gives a whole which is good.

So, as Professor Sorley says: “We cannot justly estimate the value of a man’s life by summing up the separate values of each particular action he performs or of each particular experience he undergoes; for the more his life is organized

by reason, the more is it the case that each action is not only a factor in the whole but finds its meaning in the whole."¹

Nor must the reference be only to the individual. He is as truly in organic relation to the community in which he lives as are the elements of his own life to each other and to that life as a whole. So Professor Sorley continues: "Nor can we judge the action of a society of men, with common traditions and a common purpose, simply by adding together the values of the conduct of each taken severally. It might be the case that the action of one taken alone had little or no positive value and was yet an integral and indispensable factor in a valuable whole."²

So that which is good for a community is better than that which is good only for an individual, as well as that which covers the whole of the personal life is better than that which covers but a part.

(d) *Summary*.—The grounds on which preference is rightly based are, then, duration, attainability in relation to both capacity and opportunity, and breadth or systematic inclusiveness. In the words of Professor Franz Brentano: "The province of the highest practical good embraces everything which is subject to our rational operation in so far as a good can be realized in such matter. Not merely the self but also the family, the town, the state, the whole present world of life, even distant future times, may here be taken into account. . . . To promote as far as possible the good throughout this great whole, that is manifestly the right end in life, towards which every act is to be ordered; that is the one, the highest command upon which all the rest depend. Self-devotion and, on occasion, self-sacrifice are, therefore, duties; an equal good wherever it be, and therefore in the person of another also, is, in proportion to its value, and,

¹ *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 155.

² *Ibid.*

therefore, everywhere equally to be loved, and jealousy and malignant envy are excluded." ¹

Reference to these grounds has no tendency to impose a stereotyped form on life. They are universal principles of value, but, like all other universal principles, they find expression in an indefinitely great variety of forms. People differ in all sorts of ways, and these differences are generally referable to capacity and opportunity. But such reference is also that of innumerable differences to common general terms, for capacities and opportunities are not alike for any two persons. So the valuation of good takes on a specific form in every individual. In so far as each seeks the good, he seeks it in his own way. Universal value can be realized only in particular lives with all the individuality that belongs to each. The artist, the worker in science, the statesman, the poet, the priest, the teacher, the manual labourer, can alike realize universal good by the deeds of a particular life. Yet the good realized by each is not merely individual. Each adds to the common good if only he works for the greatest and highest good possible to him with his own powers acting in his own circumstances.

¹ *The Origin of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong*, p. 28.

CHAPTER VI.

ULTIMATE GOOD.

1. **Application of Standard.**

We have now to consider how far the actual ends of human endeavour satisfy the standard of value reached in the last chapter. We may dismiss at once all material and external things, as we have seen that these are only means. The ends really sought are always involved in personal life, though their influence may be implicitly pervasive, rather than explicitly directive. The question is: What should be preferred as supremely good by human beings as such? Of course, people differ in all sorts of ways, and their valuations and preferences reflect this variety. Yet beneath all the surface marks of distinction there is an underlying common nature. The agreement is more profound than the divergences, even when these are most obvious. Therefore, the universal good for mankind must be such as at once satisfies the needs of the common nature and gives scope for the fullest satisfaction of individual capacity. *Caplan 7*

2. **The End as Happiness.**

(i) **AMBIGUITY OF TERM.**—A common, and at first sight sufficient, conception of the highest good for man is that it consists in happiness. It is pointed out that, as a fact, all human beings desire to be happy, and that moralists and religious teachers have never hesitated to influence men by promise of happiness. (People, indeed, seek happiness in

many ways—in production and contemplation of beauty, in acquisition or application of knowledge, in exercise of power and influence, in pursuit of wealth or enjoyment. But these, it is said, are means; the end in view is always a happy life, and the success of every life is gauged by the degree to which it succeeds in realizing that aim.)

The facts are not open to question. (Everybody finds it good to be happy, and wishes a happy life for himself and his friends.) But the interpretation of the facts is another matter.

(With happiness and unhappiness as facts all are familiar. Indeed, every life is constantly tinged with one or the other in lighter or in darker shades. But familiarity does not ensure exact knowledge.) Many who are familiar with the telephone as an instrument in daily use, have little or no knowledge of the natural force it adapts to human convenience, or of the structure through which the adaptation is made. (So people may know they are happy without any clear conception of the nature of the happiness they enjoy. Happiness and unhappiness are modes of life, and are, therefore, as complex as is all life. And the nature of the complex is revealed only by analysis.)

(While it is true, then, that everybody knows what happiness means in experience, it is by no means true that everybody knows what happiness is in its nature.) The whole history of ethical speculation shows that this is so. (In ancient Greece, Aristotle, Aristippus, and Epicurus, all taught that happiness is the supreme good for men.) But the agreement was only verbal. Regarding life as essentially a spiritual activity, Aristotle explained happiness as the most perfect activity of the whole soul.) On the other hand, Aristippus and Epicurus, holding that life is fundamentally sensuous, identified happiness with agreeable feeling or pleasure.) But again the agreement was mainly verbal. With Aristippus pleasure was the particular bodily affection of the moment, with Epicurus a state of mental calm enduring through life,

and to the securing of which those transitory gratifications must often be sacrificed.

The ambiguities have persisted. St. Thomas Aquinas, broadly following Aristotle, called the supreme good 'happiness,' but found it realizable only in loving contemplation of the Divine nature. On the other hand, the disciples of materialism, regarding man as fundamentally an animal whose apparent spiritual life is merely an aspect of the bodily life, have continued to identify happiness with pleasure in one or other of the ancient senses, or in a more or less confused way with both. This, indeed, without analysis. It seemed obvious to Bentham that "what happiness is every man knows, because what pleasure is, every man knows, and what pain is, every man knows."¹ Acquaintance with the history of ethical thought would have shown him that this is true only when 'knows' is used in the sense of 'is familiar with,' not in that of 'understands the nature of.' But in the former sense no theoretical reasonings can be based upon the fact of this knowledge.

(ii) NATURE OF HAPPINESS. — If the account of human life which has been sketched in the preceding chapters is justified by experience, the nature of happiness must be sought with Aristotle and Aquinas in relation to spiritual activity, not to bodily sensibility. But the influence of the identification of happiness with pleasure by the epicurean school has given to the common significance of 'happiness' a distinctly hedonic tone. To speak to-day of the supreme good for man as 'happiness' would be to lay the whole doctrine open to misapprehension. Explain the meaning given to the term as carefully as one might, the association with sensuous pleasure involved in its current signification could not be excluded. Moreover it is always undesirable to give restricted or unusual senses to words in common everyday use.

¹ *Constitutional Code. Works, IX., 123.*

Constitutional Code, IX., 123.

Using terms, then, in their ordinary significance, it may be laid down that every happy experience is a piece of life in which some spiritual need is satisfied; a happy life is one in which such satisfaction is fullest and most unalloyed. (To speak of 'a happy life' rather than of 'happiness' emphasizes the important point that happiness is a quality of life.) We can separate it in thought from the experience of which it is a constituent factor, as we can think of the direction or the speed of a moving body without respect to the body which moves. But in the one case, as in the other, we have simply an abstraction, not something with a separate and independent existence.

(Happiness is found in many various forms of experience. The artist may be happy in his art, the inventor in his contrivances, the craftsman in his skilful handiwork.) Or the ostensible result may be of little or no worth, yet happiness be felt in the skilful exercise of capacity, as when a mathematician is happily engrossed in the solution of a problem of purely theoretical interest, or a chess-player in a game with an opponent worthy of his prowess. (The effective purpose in such cases is the activity itself, not the securing of the external result which is its occasion.)

(But though found, happiness is not the end sought. The religious man does not seek communion with God in order that he may be happy, but he is happy when he has the consciousness of such communion; the artist does not exercise his art in order to secure happiness, but he is impelled by his nature to exercise it, and in the exercise he finds happiness because the deep needs of that nature are satisfied.) And so throughout. Happiness in some form attends the successful putting forth of activity. Thus it is easy to understand why one may find temporary happiness in conduct which is afterwards bitterly regretted. At the time of action some clamant call of part of the personality was answered, and satisfaction attended the response. But later the fuller self has appre-

hended that the partial and temporary satisfaction hindered the fuller satisfaction which accompanies the attainment of a wider purpose.

(Happiness, then, is not the good sought by human efforts, but a witness that a good has been realized. And it is complete and perfect in proportion as the good gained satisfies the conditions of right preference. So it may be said that happiness of life results from all activity which helps to realize the supreme good. But it is not itself that good.)

Happiness, then, is the realization that an experience in all its fullness has been good, in that it has satisfied the needs of the self.) But satisfaction is always pleasant, or marked by agreeable feeling. So pleasure is a constituent in happiness. It characterizes the value for feeling of the experience. But it is not identical with happiness, for that marks the value for the whole self—for the will and for the intellect as well as for the feelings. (Enjoyment is not happiness, though it may enter into happiness.)

(iii) HEDONISM.

(a) *Bentham's Doctrine*.—The doctrine of hedonism (from *ἡδονή*, pleasure) that happiness is the highest good, and is attained by securing the greatest possible amount of pleasure, and that, consequently, pleasure is the ultimate test of value, received its most systematic form from Jeremy Bentham in the early part of the nineteenth century.) Its expression of the right aim of conduct as "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" became the watchword of social reformers and had great influence on English and French ethical speculation. Through its advocacy with persuasive force by John Stuart Mill it affected the thought of very large numbers of earnest and thoughtful people. It will be well, then, to give some further consideration to the implications of so widely accepted a theory.

(Bentham's main interest was in the improvement through

legislation of the conditions of life of the mass of the people. He sought to lay bare the natural laws which determine men's conduct, and from these to deduce the principles of beneficent legislation. His aim, therefore, was to formulate an exact science of conduct in all its aspects. Of this general science ethics would be an integral part dealing with conduct as individual, while legislation directly regards communities.

(a) *Its Basis*.—Success in this was seen to depend on two things—the enunciation of axioms of equal validity with those of mathematics and the application of quantitative methods to determine the comparative value of different modes of action. Once these were postulated, ethics could lay down the lines of individual conduct, and legislation could direct its regulative and coercive powers to promote them in the whole community. The watchword throughout was ‘utility.’ Consequently, the whole scheme was termed ‘utilitarian’; though the term was in time restricted to the ethical system.

The required axioms called for no long search. They lay on the surface of the ethical speculation of the time, influenced, as it was, by the philosophy of David Hume. “Pleasure is itself a good, nay, setting aside immunity from pain, the only good. Pain is in itself an evil, and indeed, without exception, the only evil, or else the words good and evil have no meaning. And this is alike true of every sort of pain, and of every sort of pleasure.”¹ These were assumed by Bentham to be the axiomatic or self-evident truths required.

(β) *Its Method*.—There was nothing novel in this, and nothing to account for the fact that Bentham was esteemed by his disciples as the prophet of a new revelation. It was not the doctrine, but the method, which filled the minds of many with confident anticipations and inspired efforts which

¹ *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, ch. ix.

did much to change the face of social and political life during the last century.

In order to apply to moral problems quantitative methods borrowed from physics, the first necessity was to postulate a single simple force susceptible of variation only in quantity, the various combinations of which would explain all human activities, as the composition of different amounts of one fundamental physical force, acting in different directions, accounts for all varieties of motion. The soul must be regarded as a simple point, driven hither and thither according to the strength and direction of the resultant of the forces that impinge upon it. But this was in harmony with the prevalent psychological doctrine that the whole of conscious life can be resolved into more or less complex associations of elementary sensations passively received.

This postulate once accepted, the path seemed clear. The worth of conduct appeared to be made independent of the complex mental processes of which the actor is conscious, for it was held that nothing in those processes is operative save the one simple force which each contains, though, it may be, obscurely. The standard of value became the purely objective one of the utility—or value expressed in amounts of pleasure—of the consequences brought about by the action, for that is the extent to which the action has realized the supreme good.

From the assumption that the supreme value of pleasure needs no demonstration but is its own guarantee, it was not a far step to find the one simple motive power of human life in pleasure and pain as well, provided that pain be interpreted as a negative amount of the same feeling of which pleasure is the positive expression. For, if there be but one ultimate force in all conduct, that force must be manifested throughout: the whole activity is simply the unfolding of its operation in changing circumstances. So Bentham dogmatically laid down that "no man has ever had, can, or could

have a motive different from the pursuit of pleasure or of shunning pain." ¹ But, as this is also the end to be sought, it not only holds that "Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, *pain* and *pleasure*" but that "it is for them alone to point out what we ought to do, as well as to determine what we shall do." ²

(γ) *Its General Formula.*—If, however, the value of conduct is to be estimated by the richness in amounts of pleasure of the sum of its consequences, as all conduct affects others there is no reason why the pleasure of one person should be regarded as of more worth than the pleasure of another. Hence arose the famous formula "The greatest happiness of the greatest number," in the assessment of which "each is to count for one, and none for more than one."

(b) *Examination of the Doctrine.*

(a) *Its Basis.*—Thus stated in what may be called its lowest terms, the doctrine seems sufficiently remote from the real complex life from which it professes to be derived, and to which it is intended to be applied. It bears a strong family likeness to the abstract psychology of association of sensations as expounded by John Stuart Mill's father, James Mill, and to the theoretical political economy of Ricardo. It was, in short, a typical product of the early nineteenth century. Its simplification by abstraction and the arbitrary assumptions on which that simplification is based make its hedonist moralist at least as unreal as the 'economic man,' ruled only by material self-interest, of the economist, while its calculation of consequences is as impracticable as the perfect fluidity of capital and labour postulated by Ricardo.

Bentham claimed to base his doctrine on experience, but this can be granted only so far as experience shows that pleasure and pain are influences on conduct, which is a long way from proving them to be the sole influences. As soon

¹ *Deontology*, vol. i., p. 126.

² *Principles of M. and L.*, p. 1.

as experience is interrogated apart from pre-suppositions its answer is plain. J. S. Mill who, while accepting the general utilitarian formula tried to reconcile the system with the actual facts of life, admitted that "when the will is said to be determined by motives, a motive does not mean always, or solely, the anticipation of a pleasure or of a pain."¹

Even if the truth of Bentham's assumption were admitted, it is not easy to see how a doctrine of moral obligation could be conjoined with this view of psychological necessity. If a person can do no other than seek pleasure and shun pain, what significance can be attached to the injunction that he *ought* to do these things? The utmost that can be insisted on is that it is his duty to seek the greatest possible balance of pleasure over pain, and that, indeed, is what Bentham urges. But this substitutes for the position that man is wholly determined by his feelings, on which the doctrine professes to be based, the inconsistent position that he guides his conduct by calculation of consequences in terms of feeling; that is, by reason.

In Bentham's argument, indeed, lurks a confusion. It is true that we are moved by a feeling of the value of the end, that we anticipate some satisfaction from seeking and attaining it. But the anticipation of a pleasure is not the pleasure anticipated. Experience, indeed, often shows that there is little relation between them. This confusion between a present feeling which enters into motive, and a possible future feeling which as yet does not exist, and so is nothing, vitiates the whole conception of motive.

(β) *Its Method*.—The calculation of consequences was the most characteristic feature of Bentham's contribution to ethics. We have seen that consequences which could have been foreseen should be taken into account in moral judgements, but

¹ *A System of Logic*, Bk. vi., ch. ii., 4.

that unforeseeable consequences should be excluded.¹ All consequences, however, must enter into a quantitative estimate of the value of conduct judged solely by them.

Here, however, the doctrine makes another abstraction. It is not the actual consequences which are to be considered, but only the amount and kind of feeling in them. This assumes the possibility of a constant unit of feeling, which depends on the assumption of a uniform nature throughout the whole range of pleasure-pain feelings.

Such a unit as is required is unthinkable. For feeling is simply a factor in actual organic conscious processes, and its nature is modified by all the other factors both separately and collectively. We cannot compare as definitely greater or less the amounts of pleasure attending quite different kinds of experience; say reading Shakespeare, drinking wine, or playing golf. As Brentano says: "A more intense pleasure is never really made up of twelve less intense pleasures distinguishable as equal parts within it, as a foot is made up of twelve inches. So the matter presents itself even in simpler cases. But how foolish would any one appear were he to assert that the pleasure he had in smoking a good cigar increased 127, or, let us say, 1077 times in intensity yielded a measure of the pleasure experienced by him in listening to a symphony of Beethoven or contemplating one of Raphael's madonnas!"²

Still less can we measure comparatively the amounts of pleasure received by different people from all varieties of experience. To quote the comment of Sir Leslie Stephen: "If I prefer Shakespeare to a mutton-chop, I may say that I so far judge the pleasures of imagination to be preferable for me to those of the senses. But how can I leap from that proposition to the proposition that they are preferable for others? They are clearly not preferable for the pig, or to

¹ See pp. 60-61. ² *The Origin of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*, p. 27.

the Patagonian, or even to those civilized men who are in this matter of the pig's way of thinking. At most, I may infer that certain cultivated minds find more pleasure in poetry than in eating, but still it does not follow that the cultivated man finds more pleasure in poetry than the sensual man finds in eating. The two men are differently constituted throughout, and it may be that the intellectual man has lost in one kind of sensibility what he has gained in another."¹

The same kind of difficulties present themselves in an intensified form if we attempt to balance amounts of pleasure and of pain.

Experience, then, protests against the assumption that pleasure and pain as known are always one in quality and differ only in amount. According to Bentham, "quantity of pleasure being equal, pushpin is as good as poetry."² Common sense rebels. It refuses thus to isolate one factor in the total experience and to assess the whole by that. Experience knows not 'pleasure' as a separate thing; it knows only *pleasures* of various kinds and values. And it is well aware that the hedonic value of an experience depends not on the external objects but on the relation of these to the self at the moment. And this is by no means constant. The truth and pertinence of Stephen's illustrations are obvious: "Only an infant compares his love for his cousin with his love for jam-tart. Shakespeare himself would at the right moment have preferred a cup of sack to the sweetest music or the loftiest poetry. A starving saint might choose to eat a crust of bread rather than listen to the most edifying sermon."³

(γ) *Mill's Modifications*.—It was in the rejection of this uniformity of nature in pleasure and pain that J. S. Mill most profoundly modified the doctrine of Bentham. He insisted that, irrespective of their amounts, the pleasures

¹ *Science of Ethics*, p. 400. ² *Mill's Dissertations*, vol. ii., p. 389.

³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 400-401.

attending the exercise of the intellect or the imagination are preferable in kind to those of the senses. This agrees with the common judgement of mankind, but is destructive of the whole hedonist doctrine. For value is no longer determined by amount of pleasure, whether exactly measured or vaguely computed, but by some other standard. And, as the less is judged by the greater, this involves recognition of a greater good than pleasure.

Mill really finds the standard in relation to the whole personality. He would grade pleasures in value according to the degree to which the personality is involved in each. It naturally follows that the judgement of the cultivated man is decisive on questions of comparative value, as he alone has a range of experience which includes pleasures of all ranks. The mass of mankind is incompetent to judge, for most men know not what is good for them. "Of their bodily wants and ailments mankind are generally conscious; but the want of the mind, the want of being wiser and better, is, in the far greater number of cases, unfelt: some of its disastrous consequences are felt, but are ascribed to any imaginable cause except the true one."¹ Yet, he insists, the latter are of higher worth, and "the duty of man is the same in respect to his own nature as in respect to the nature of all other things—namely, not to follow but to amend it."² And this attempt is not prompted by pleasure or anticipation of pleasure, for "the truth is that there is hardly a single point of excellence belonging to human character, which is not decidedly repugnant to the untutored feelings of human nature."³

All this again shows that the fundamental assumptions of hedonism have been abandoned. After all, men are not to be guided by anticipations of pleasure suggested by their

¹ *Dissertations and Discussions*, vol. i., p. 28.

² *Essays on Religion*, p. 54.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

own experience, but by some external authority which assures them that by relinquishing certain pleasures now they will put themselves on the road to the enjoyment of greater blessedness hereafter.

Mill's "reconstruction" of hedonism, therefore, is really an abandonment of its fundamental positions, and the substitution of a view of the standard of value which approaches very nearly to that held by moralists who make the reality of spiritual activity their central doctrine.

(δ) *The General Formula.*—There remains, however, the general formula—"the greatest happiness of the greatest number." Mill can no longer derive this from the abstract calculations supposed in Bentham's system. But his own attempt to justify it cannot be accepted. He tried to rest the obligation on the ground that each man seeks his own happiness. But the inference is invalid. That A seeks the happiness of A, and B of B, gives no presumption that either will seek the happiness of $A + B$, whether severally or conjointly, still less that he ought to do so. From the psychological position that nobody can desire anything but his own pleasure no legitimate transition can be made to the position that everybody ought to desire the pleasure of all.

Nor can the transition be made from the ethical position that each man ought to seek his own pleasure. For this conceives his own pleasure as his only good and, therefore, his ultimate end. A man may, indeed, promote the pleasures of others because he finds pleasure in contemplating their enjoyment. But then his beneficence is only a means; the end is still egoistic. The final good cannot be at once the pleasure of all and the individual pleasure of each. For, as hedonism starts with the assumption that men are separate units, it can conceive society only as an aggregate of similar units. The greatest pleasure of the greatest number is then to be found by adding together the sums of the pleasures

experienced by individuals. It may, of course, be maintained that, on this hypothesis, the greatest sum will be secured by each person looking solely after himself. But this is incompatible with his looking equally after others. The general hedonist formula thus cannot be justified on hedonist grounds.

Later hedonist moralists, as the late Professor Henry Sidgwick, have regarded the formula as a self-evident truth. But this seems to rest on the hypothesis, which we have seen reason to reject, that all pleasure and pain are feelings of the same kind, and on the fundamental assumption of the supreme value of happiness interpreted in terms of pleasure. If differences of quality be admitted it is by no means obvious that the higher pleasures of a saint, a philosopher, a poet, are not of more value to the world than the lower pleasures of many gluttons or drunkards or imbeciles. We have no longer a community which is merely a sum of homogeneous units of which each should count as one, and none as more than one, but an organic whole in which the value of each constituent is related functionally to that whole.

(c) *The Sanctions*.—However justified, this formula expressed the utilitarian conception of the concrete form in which the supreme good of mankind could be realized. But it is evident that it does not describe the actual aims of a large number of people. Some further incentives, therefore, were recognized as necessary to induce men to set aside their own pleasure for the sake of the general good. They were found in pleasures and pains—especially pains—artificially connected with conduct which the community in general approves or disapproves. These are the *Sanctions* which play an important part in hedonist theories.

There are *natural* sanctions, such as impaired health induced by debauchery, *social* sanctions in the approval or disapproval of the people among whom one lives, *legal*

sanctions or the punishments attached by law to definite offences. Such compulsion may induce ostensible external obedience to the recognized moral law, and this is all the doctrine that only consequences count demands. But they can do no more. From the bare *must* of compulsion the *ought* of moral obligation cannot spring. Mill again departed from hedonism when he gave the highest importance to the *internal* sanctions of conscience and religion; which, indeed, are sanctions in quite another sense than those which are modes of external constraint.

(d) *Summary.*—On analysis, then, hedonism fails to justify itself. It rests on an inadequate analysis of happiness. As Mill himself said, "Happiness is not an abstract idea, but a concrete whole."¹ It deals throughout with abstractions, but it fails to see that its abstractions are not real concrete facts. It claims to be free from assumptions and to be based wholly in experience. In reality it is free not from assumptions, but only from any attempt to examine them, and experience contradicts it at every important point. Its fundamental error is the assignment of reality to the abstract conception of pleasure. In the words of Lotze: "Pleasure in itself is an incomplete thought so long as we are not also told what it is that is enjoyed. I do not refer to the external impression from which it arises, but to the specific content of the pleasure itself when it has arisen. Just as it is impossible to feel in general without feeling something, or, to speak more correctly, without feeling in some particular way as, *e.g.* in the ways which we call red or sweet, hard or warm; . . . so is it out of the question to talk of pleasure which is simply pure enjoyment, and not the enjoyment of something, of pleasure which is merely greater or less in amount, merely more or less evanescent, but without qualitative content."²

¹ *Utilitarianism*, ch. iv.

² *Microcosmus*, Eng. trans., vol. i., p. 694.

The idea of finding an objective standard of value in feeling, which is purely a subjective impression, is, indeed, chimerical. Thus the very foundations of the hedonic edifice are laid in the clouds of fancy. But in the universal character given to the supreme good for which men should strive, utilitarianism, especially as preached by Mill, has done good service to ethical thought. If for 'happiness' we substitute 'good' we not only get nearest to Mill's meaning, but we fairly express the nature of the supreme end.

A brief consideration of such a system is justified because the evil that theories do lives after them. Their catchwords are taken up by many who never think of what they involve, and the doctrine that each ought to seek pleasure appeals strongly to many innate impulses. Doubtless, the prophets of hedonism mean something different from what the average man would understand by seeking his own pleasure. The latter would commonly regard it as a license to get all the enjoyment possible out of the passing moments as they fly. His teachers, on the contrary, have in view an elaborate calculation from which they deduce the conclusion that following the precepts of ordinary morality will on the whole yield the best hedonic results. In practical precept they differ little from other moralists. But, as average men are in the majority in every community, a general acceptance of hedonist doctrine inevitably tends towards a degradation of current morality.

3. **Naturalism.**

(i) **SELF-REALIZATION.**

(a) *Cultivation of Impulses.*—As human life has to be lived in the natural world, and man himself is part of nature, that what is natural is good is an assumption easily made. To Rousseau and other prophets of the philosophy of feeling in the eighteenth century the core of human life was sought by stripping away all that had been evolved

throughout the ages. For it was all regarded as artificial and, consequently, evil. Thus, civilization was set forth as the cause of human degradation, and the pattern man was found in an imaginary noble savage. All human instincts were assumed to be good simply because they are natural. Thus the true end of human life was found in the realization of the innate capacities of each individual, as far as possible independently of his fellows. Not that social relations could be ignored, but that they were regarded simply from the standpoint of the individual.

Such a view is not devoid of truth in what it affirms. To make the best of one's powers is a means to the realization of good. But the denial that social relations are integral parts of personality is a fatal error. Nor is this all. The supreme good cannot be inherent in individual development, for it is the external standard by which such development is assessed. It must, therefore, be independent of it. The good is always objective and universal; that is, it is the same for you and for me and for all men. For an individual to place ultimate good in himself is really to deny that there is any ultimate good. That is the good in which each will find full satisfaction, but it is evidently impossible that the private good of each individual can be such a universal end.

It follows that an individual standard is no standard at all. Each interprets it in his own way, and finds the good in relation to what the self actually is. So it cannot lead to the suppression of any impulse. The judgement that some impulses should be checked because their tendency is evil is possible only when a standard independent of the individual is brought to bear. By itself a doctrine of self-development can make nothing of sin, for in the sense of being part of human constitution the tendency to sin is as natural as the tendency to holiness. Yet sin is a fact of moral experience which no theory of life can afford to ignore.

(b) *Harmonious Development*.—If it be said that what should be sought is ‘harmonious development’ then a standard other than development must be brought in to determine what is ‘harmonious.’ If it mean that no capacity should be cultivated more than another, then the standard would appear to be a kind of average mediocrity. But the great things in the world have always been done by men who in this sense were abnormal. Plato, St. Francis, Luther, Raphael, Shakespeare, Beethoven, were not examples of equal development of all human capacities, but of the predominant development of that capacity in which each towered above the level of mankind.

If, on the other hand, self-realization be taken to mean just this kind of development of the strongest capacity, it justifies a Nero or a Napoleon. The logical outcome is the ‘super-man’ of Nietzsche, who, as superior to his fellow-men, may hold himself absolved from all the restraints of morality applicable to them.

Further, exclusive cultivation of one capacity may lead to the impoverishment of other sides of personality. Devotion to intellectual pursuits may entail such a “curious and lamentable loss of the higher aesthetic tastes” as Darwin regretted in himself, in that “the loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.”¹

(c) *Rational Development*.—Lastly, self-realization may be interpreted as the development of the rational self; that is the ordering of life by the best systematization of its values the individual can make. This, if done with clear insight, would place weight on the social as well as on the individual reference. But even in this form self-sacrifice, which is an essential condition of moral growth, seems difficult to recon-

¹ *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*, vol. i., p. 100.

cile with the ideal set up. For that is not true self-sacrifice which is made for the sake of the self. A man who would render service to his fellow men, even at great cost to his own comfort, merely in order that he might cultivate the grace of charity in his own soul, would not be acting from an altruistic motive, and would appear somewhat of a prig. Deliberately to make the perfection of one's own character the ultimate end of endeavour is, in its essence, a refined form of selfishness.

To sum up in the words of Lotze: "To cultivate oneself, and to make oneself into a perfect human being, may easily seem to be the essential scope of all human tasks; but nevertheless we must admit a deficiency in this mode of thought, which aims solely at moulding its own being into a beautiful flexible whole, doing this partly with a kind of natural instinct, partly with doctrinaire self-consciousness—a deficiency, namely, in that submission and self-sacrifice which make one element of morality."¹

(ii) EVOLUTION.

(a) *Theory*.—Since the time of Darwin the appeal to nature as determining the standard of good, has been at once universalized and systematized by the doctrine of evolution. The leading principle of evolutionary ethics is that, as the course of evolution shows the direction in which man is developing, by that very fact it indicates the direction in which he ought to develop. The underlying assumption is that what is gives a measure of what ought to be. The good is found in a later stage of that which exists. So ethics is regarded as an empirical science, the conclusions of which can be derived by induction from observed facts of human history.

It is obvious, however, that all which exists is not good in the estimation of mankind. This the ethics of evolution explains as due to imperfect adaptation to environment. It is held that the tendency of evolution is to make such adapta-

¹ *Op. cit.*, vol. ii., p. 72.

tion more perfect, and the ultimate end of man is seen in a state of equilibrium in which the process is completed.

Were only the material environment taken into account—and that is all with which the biological theory of evolution is concerned—this would evidently be a doctrine of pure materialism, and it must be objected to it that man adapts his physical environment to his own needs much more obviously than he adapts himself to that environment. But evolutionary ethics saves itself from simple materialism by including the social environment. From this point of view adaptation to environment includes human solidarity as well as harmony between life and its material conditions. In tracing the growth of practical morality and showing in it an ever-increasing dependence of the individual on society and an attendant recognition of human solidarity, evolutionary ethics has done good service. But the history of morality is one thing; a true theory of human good is another. The question before us is whether the identification of this good with the course of evolution is justified.

(b) *Criticism.*—The theory of evolution, as enunciated by Darwin, is strictly biological. The doctrine of natural selection is, roughly, that individuals or species which showed a variation more suited to their environment had an advantage over their competitors in the struggle for existence, and transmitted that advantage to their progeny. 'The survival of the fittest' has absolutely no ethical implications. Were the conditions, say of climate, profoundly changed, the fittest to survive might prove to be forms of life which we regard as infinitely inferior to man. 'The fittest' means simply and solely 'the fittest to survive.' Consequently, there is no justification for assuming that the more evolved biologically is the better morally.

No doubt there has been also an evolution of morality. Each generation enters into possession of the valuations of its predecessors, and, on the whole, extends them, both by

finding more in the old objects of value and by discovering new objects of value, a process illustrated by the growth of knowledge. But this spiritual evolution is not dependent on biological evolution. The march of progress was thrown back for centuries by the barbarian invasion of the Roman empire. The physically 'fittest' are the strongest. 'Might is Right' is the only principle inherent in the struggle for physical existence.

Even when we disregard the physical struggle, and look only at the evolution of conduct, we cannot recognize more than a general advance; we cannot assume that every change is improvement. The moral life, like the physical life, is always process, but not all process is progress. There have been times of retrogression. For example, as the late Bishop Stubbs pointed out, "The sixteenth century, as a century of ideas, real, grand, and numerous, is not to be compared with the thirteenth: the ideas are not so pure, not so living, nor so refined; the men are not so earnest, so single-hearted, so loveable by far. Much doubtless has been gained in strength of purpose, and much in material progress; but compare the one set of men with the other as men, and the ideas as ideas, and the advantage is wonderfully in favour of the semi-barbarous age, above that of the Renaissance and the Reformation."¹

In our own day, too, there is much that makes the pessimist's insistence on human decadence plausible. Doubtless, each new generation is little likely to re-echo the lament of Elijah "I am not better than my fathers." And this is natural. The ideals of youth are hopes as yet unrealized; those of the past have been tried and too often found wanting. "Man never is, but always to be, blest." It is well that mankind should look forward to a future better than the present, and strive to realize it.

¹ *Lectures on European History*, p. 2.

On the whole, there has undoubtedly been moral progress in the past, but when we say this, and when we judge that at times this progress has been arrested or even turned back, we are applying a standard other than that of increased evolution. We judge moral evolution by the standard of the good; we do not deduce that standard from the facts of evolution. We can only decide that any more evolved state is better than one less evolved because our standard of preference is independent of the fact of evolution. In short, evolution cannot tell us what is good, and what is better. Consequently, it cannot furnish the basis of ethical doctrine.

4. **Intrinsic Values.**

(i) KINDS.—Turning from criticism of theories we deem mistaken or inadequate, we will now resume our consideration of the application of the standard reached in the last chapter.

We have seen that intrinsic value is always independent of individuals, though realized by individuals. A good is something to be obtained, but obtained in such a way that it becomes part of life. In other words, value is realized in some form of spiritual activity. In a sense, indeed, spiritual activity is one, in that it is the activity of a definite personality. But according to the objects towards which it is directed it is experienced in three chief forms—intellectual, emotional, and volitional. Each involves both the others, but in each one characteristic is predominant, and may even determine and limit the objects to which the others are directed. As has been instanced, Darwin's emotional activities were limited by his intellectual interests, and gradually ceased to assimilate poetry, pictures, and music.

Each of the great types of activity has its own objects, which it seeks for their own sakes, and which, therefore, have intrinsic value. These objects are Truth, Beauty, and Moral Excellence. As each has value for human personality it may be believed that they are fundamentally one. But to that

fundamental agreement we cannot pierce. As known to us they are distinct, though at times they approach very near each other. The scientist may feel aesthetic pleasure in a 'beautiful theory,' and such terms as 'a beautiful life' or 'a beautiful soul' are felt to have a real meaning.

(ii) **TRUTH.**—Truth is the intrinsic value sought by the intellect. Our attitude in face of a statement apprehended as true is belief. Doubtless, at first, only the instrumental value of knowledge was recognized. It was seen to be of use in enabling man to cope with his environment and to adapt it to his needs. Later the intellect found satisfaction in its own activity. So St. Thomas Aquinas affirmed: "Happiness consists rather in the activity of the speculative understanding than of the practical."¹

Not the mere existence of truth, but the knowledge of truth, has value for the individual. "Man as a thinking being finds value in the truth which he seeks; it may even become the chief aim of his life, and he cherishes it on its own account—not as something alien to himself, but as completing or perfecting his own intellectual nature."²

(iii) **BEAUTY.**—Similarly, beauty is value for the emotional life. Our attitude towards the beautiful is not mere belief or acceptance of it as fact, but admiration, or a feeling of its absolute value. Like truth, beauty is not relative to individuals. People differ in tastes, as they differ in opinions; but taste is not beauty but the attempt to appreciate beauty, just as opinion is not truth but the attempt to appreciate truth. In each case the appreciation may be mistaken. Though it is true that 'there is no disputing about tastes,' so far as convincing people that their tastes are more deficient than those of others, it is by no means true that there is no standard of beauty outside the feelings of the individual.

¹ *Summa Theologica*, Pt. II., Div. I., Q. iii., Art. 5.

² Sorley: *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 31.

All progress in the production and appreciation of beauty means increased insight into that standard. Such progress in modern times is seen chiefly in music, and in a less degree in painting. In each case the complexity of modern emotional life finds complex expression, whereas sculpture reached its highest level when simple admiration for form was strongest and demanded but simple expression, and ecclesiastical architecture when religious faith was definite and general.

All art embodies ideas in material form. Through the form we penetrate to the thought, but it is only through the form that we can do so. No amount of speech or writing would enable one to appreciate a sonata. Here we find the possibility of divergence in values. We may admire the embodiment and abhor the idea embodied. Or we may find the idea both good and beautiful, but the expression clumsy or even ugly. Valuation of the idea is at once aesthetic and moral; but valuation of the expression is aesthetic only. We can fully admire a work of art only when both idea and expression please us.

But, above all, nature is prolific in beauty, and man has ever found it also expressive of ideas. As Dr. Illingworth says: "Sun-myths, star-myths, storm-myths, myths of the mountains, and the rivers, and the trees, lie at the root, as we now know so well, of all early religion. And when with the progress of reflexion these myths were criticized and sifted, man still found in the grandeur, the harmony, the beauty, the marvellous mechanism, the exuberant life, the exquisite adaptations of the material world, evidence of the existence and character of God; evidence which, whatever may be urged against its value, has, as a simple fact of history, weighed with man in every age. Nor has all our modern enlightenment materially altered our case. We have long outgrown mythology, and are intolerant of doubtful logic; but the religious influence of external nature is as strong upon us as it ever was, possibly even stronger than in some bygone times. For

the strength of the influence in question is emotional rather than intellectual, and consists in a sense of nearness or communion, of one kind or another, with the divine. And though this admits of intellectual analysis, and can be fashioned into argument, it is the sense of experience in the background which gives the argument its force.¹ . . . It should further be borne in mind that the influence in question is independent of any particular theological interpretation; co-existing alike with monotheism, polytheism, pantheism—a mystic emotion, more fundamental than the varieties of creed—a primary, permanent, worldwide agent, in the education of the human soul.”²

(iv) MORAL GOODNESS.—Aesthetic value, then, is nearly related to moral value. Indeed, by some thinkers they have been identified. But whereas it is the material embodiment which wins aesthetic admiration, even when the idea expressed is not approved, the moral value of a good act rests primarily in the motive. Approval is given to conduct as expressive of personality, whereas admiration may have no reference to personality. We may not know who produced a work of art, yet our admiration for it may be profound, and the discovery of the author adds nothing to that admiration, though it may interest us through its connexion with it.

(v) RELATIONS OF INTRINSIC VALUES.—To recognize that truth, beauty, and goodness have each and all intrinsic value is to claim that human efforts may be directed legitimately to the realization of each. It does not follow that all are attainable by all. According to a man's gifts, so is his possible service. To paint pictures, to write poems or essays or novels, to plan noble buildings, to extend the bounds of knowledge, to apply knowledge to the satisfaction of human needs, are all modes in which intrinsic value can be secured.

So, too, in the steady fulfilment of the common avocations

¹ *Divine Immanence*, pp. 22-23.

² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

of life. Moral goodness alone is within the reach of everybody at all times. Knowledge of truth and appreciation of beauty are open to the majority of mankind to a very limited extent. Nor by those with the capacity is beauty to be found in many of the surroundings of life. The artistic soul finds suffering rather than satisfaction in the sight of the great majority of the buildings of which modern towns are composed, in the sky made murky by smoke, in the sordid conditions under which many of his fellow creatures are compelled to live. But those ugly surroundings furnish abundant opportunities for realizing many of the social forms of goodness.

5. **The Supreme End.**

(i) **UNIVERSAL CHARACTER OF GOODNESS.**—Goodness alone is universal. As Professor Sorley says: "It does not, like the other values, depend upon certain special circumstances or some special endowment of intellect or skill. It can be exhibited in any circumstances whatever."¹

Goodness is universal in another way. Art may pander to vice, knowledge may be turned to evil account. Neither, then, can be by itself the ultimate good of man. Final value must always be decided by the standard of goodness. This is apparent also from the individual standpoint. Truth and beauty satisfy specific modes of spiritual activity. Goodness satisfies the whole personality, for it is the intrinsic value directly related to the will, which is but another name for the personality in definite action. That this activity of the whole self may specifically seek truth or beauty or utility as immediate ends is true. But whatever such immediate end, it must be sought either in the way of righteousness or in the way of unrighteousness. Truth and beauty can exist apart from any individual life: moral quality cannot. It is the keynote of the whole life.

Goodness is universal also in the range of its objects. While

¹ *Op. cit.* p. 516.

its spring is in the heart, it manifests itself in social relations in an ever-widening circle, which potentially includes all humanity.

(ii) LOVE OF GOODNESS.—The mainspring of beneficent action is love, for only through love can one personality influence the will of another. Thus the essence of moral goodness is summed up in love of God and love of our neighbour. Love of God means love of all that is good. "For how else do we think of God than as the sum of all that is good raised to an infinite degree?"¹ And, as St. Thomas Aquinas says: "Whatever He wishes, He wishes in the light of the general good; and that is His own goodness, which is the good of the whole universe. . . . Therefore, whoever wills anything under any aspect of goodness, has a will conformable to the divine will in point of the thing willed."² "So," as Brentano goes on, "the two propositions that we should love our neighbour as ourselves, and love God above all else, are manifestly so closely related that we are no longer surprised to find added the words that the one law is like unto the other. The law that we are to love our neighbour, it should be carefully noted, is not subordinated to that of love of God, and derived from it; it is, according to the Christian view, not right because God has required it, rather He requires it because it is by nature right; and this rightness is made manifest in the same way, and with the same clearness by means, so to speak, of the same ray of natural knowledge."³

(iii) DEVELOPMENT OF GOODNESS.—The highest intrinsic value, then, is moral goodness. That is not simply one value among other coordinate values, but includes them all. A man realizes goodness in the daily life determined by his capacity and his circumstances. It is only when truth or beauty is made ultimate that the single-hearted pursuit of

¹ Brentano: *Op. cit.*, p. 37.

² *Op. cit.*: Pt. II., Div. I., Q. xix., Art. 10.

³ *Ibid.*

them, without regard to moral values, becomes evil. So, too, the desire for happiness or for material goods, and the satisfaction of the impulse to self-realization may be made means towards the ultimate end. The perfect life has room for many kinds of activities and for many subordinate ends.

Such ends change as life goes on. For they are means to the fulfilment of purpose, and moral purpose becomes wider and richer as experience accumulates. As it is progressively realized, it is progressively understood, and progressively moulds the tastes and affections. What is antagonistic to it appears increasingly ugly, false, and repugnant; what is in agreement with it wins increasing admiration and devotion. So the end becomes fully concrete—a fullness of life realizing capacity ever more perfectly through effort inspired by faith and love.

Not that the ultimate purpose is always clearly before consciousness. It is rather enshrined in the depths of being and shows itself in the general tendency of all forms of activity. The purposes which commonly engage attention are more immediate. In them desirable ends are apprehended, and definite plans are formed to realize them. But such ends and endeavours express the whole personality, and their common character shows the kind of end in which satisfaction is sought.

Here appears the difference between the systematized and the unsystematized life. In the former the nature of the ultimate end towards which the life is directed has been both apprehended and adopted. It is the root from which all conduct springs, the standard by which all immediate ends must be tried. Everything in life depends ultimately upon it. In the unsystematized life, on the contrary, the general tendency is left to the drift of instinct and impulse reacting on the successive changes in the environment. There is no ruling principle, and for that very reason the life is ineffective. The most important thing in the practical direction of life is, then, the conscious adoption of the purpose to seek the highest intrinsic good.

CHAPTER VII.

REALIZATION OF GOOD (i).

1. **Right Conduct.**

We have now completed our examination of the primary problems of ethics. We have discussed the standard by which the values of human purposes should be tested, and we have applied that standard to the determination of the relative worth of the great classes of intrinsic good which can be made ends of human endeavour. We have found that the ultimate purpose of life, to which all other ends are ancillary, is the realization of moral goodness in ourselves and in our fellows.

We cannot stop here. Acceptance of end implies adoption of means. So, from consideration of what ought to be *sought* we are led to consideration of the nature of what ought to be *done*; that is, of the principles which should underlie voluntary human activity, or conduct.

Conduct which realizes intrinsic good is *right*; that which is opposed to such realization is *wrong*. *Right* and *wrong*, therefore, are terms descriptive of means, and imply reference to some end. Those actions are right which are best fitted to carry out a good purpose. So the value of conduct is seen to be primarily instrumental, though, so far as it includes a good motive, it has intrinsic value as well.

It is evident that the justification of a judgement on an action as right or wrong must be found in analysis of the whole circumstances. The end sought and the motive for

seeking it must be weighed, the possible means of attaining that end compared, the consequences likely to follow from each considered. For that action alone can be judged right which is the best possible to the agent at the time.

Such an analysis would yield fresh results for every voluntary action, for in its full detail, each act is unique; it has never occurred before and will never be repeated. It is equally evident that such a full analysis is seldom, if ever, possible, and is yet more infrequently attempted. The experience of ages has classed actions under salient characteristics, and corresponding maxims of conduct are current among men, approving some classes of deeds, condemning others. In these is no explicit reference to an end sought—the prohibition of evil deeds, such as murder, theft, and the like, is in absolute terms.

It is by such maxims that conduct is directly judged to be right or wrong. So the meaning of those terms which first presents itself to the mind is conformity, or want of conformity, to recognized rules or laws. Yet there is always implicit the assumption that the explicit rules make for righteousness. ‘They are right *and* they tend to good’ is accepted even by those who would reject the further statement ‘They are right *because* they tend to good.’

2. Intuitionism.

(i) PRINCIPLES.—This leads to consideration of the basis of the moral code. It is an immediate fact of experience that the recognition that a course of action is right carries with it a feeling of obligation to follow it.

Here is the foundation of the intuitional view of ethics, of which the essential principles are that moral law is self-evident, and that, irrespective of their consequences, actions are right when they are in conformity with that law, wrong when they violate it.

The intuitional doctrine, therefore, is the antithesis of

hedonism, which finds the sole test in consequences, and accordingly denies that any rule of conduct is absolute and axiomatic.

That either motives or consequences are indifferent to the moral quality of actions is repugnant to experience. Both are invariably taken into account. It is because of the results they are intended to secure that many actions are approved. On the other hand, we are convinced that the moral value of conduct depends primarily on the motive which inspires it. Indeed, our analysis of voluntary action has shown that motive and consequences by themselves are abstractions—that the whole personal action, on which moral judgement is passed, includes them both. We cannot agree, therefore, that intention to adhere to a moral rule is by itself any more decisive of the value of conduct than are the actual consequences of an action apart from the agent.

(ii) DOGMATIC INTUITIONISM.

(a) *Nature of Moral Maxims.*—The fundamental doctrine of intuitionism, however, is that moral rules are self-evident; that is, incapable of proof or justification outside themselves. It is claimed that their rightness is as immediately perceived as is the colour of the sky, and that, in the one case as in the other, no reason for it can be given except that so it is.

We have seen that judgements of the value of the great spiritual objects of life are self-evident.¹ But rules of conduct are instrumental to the attainment of these. Their value is relative, and the ground is not in themselves but in the ends they subserve.

Doubtless, in many cases we are immediately confident of the rightness or wrongness of our actions. At times, certainly, men do wrong because they have not the insight to discern what in the circumstances it is right to do, though they wish to do it. But often it is not so. Wrong is done, not through failure to distinguish between what is right and what is

¹ See pp. 72-73.

wrong, but because inclination for the wrong is stronger than conviction of the right. It is not that people do not see what they ought to do, but that they do not like doing it.

Further, we acknowledge the general validity of the moral maxims current in the society in which we live. This is the natural result of our education and our life among our fellows. From childhood we have mixed with people who more or less consistently recognize the binding force of definite moral rules, even though they do not always act upon them. Such rules have been set before us by precept even more than by example; infraction of them has been more or less constantly followed by penalties. They have been so assimilated that they have become part of ourselves. Normally we no more question them than we question the beliefs in the facts and laws of the physical world which we have similarly received on the authority of others. Like our judgements of intrinsic value, our judgements of right and wrong are largely the outcome of unanalysed and unquestioned habit.

No wonder they seem true to us. But, as Dr. G. E. Moore warns us; "that a proposition appears to be true can never be a valid argument that true it really is."¹

(b) *Variety of Moral Maxims.*—Moreover, it is certain there has never been agreement among mankind as to the laws regarded as self-evident. The history of morality shows such a variety of rules of conduct accepted as obligatory by various peoples at different times that Macaulay could say with some plausibility that morality is a matter of fashion. It is true that on penetrating beneath the definite rules they are found often to be divergent expressions, dictated by different circumstances, of the same more general principle; for example, the general principle of serving God underlay, in different ages, the very diverse expressions of religious

¹ *Principia Ethica*, p. 143.

persecution and toleration. This, however, raises the question as to whether the formulated rule or the unformulated principle is to be regarded as self-evident.

An equally serious practical objection to accepting any rule of conduct as axiomatic, and, therefore, absolute and universal in its application, is that though the rules accepted in our own society may serve well enough in ordinary situations, yet occasions in which there is conflict between them are not merely imaginable, but actually experienced. The question then arises of which rule should decide the issue. Such possibility of conflict between moral rules has given rise to Casuistry, the aim of which is, by analysis of imagined situations, to decide which of two conflicting maxims should be followed. Such analysis and decision imply appeal to a standard other than the rules themselves, and, in whatever form it may be stated, that standard is the amount of good realizable by each course of action.

The assumption, then, as self-evident, of general rules of conduct, under one of which each particular situation can be brought, and the right course of action syllogistically deduced, cannot be justified by appeal to actual moral experience.

(iii) FORMAL INTUITIONISM.—Contradiction between particular laws is avoided if there be substituted for them one general maxim of following duty, or doing what is right simply because it is right. This was the position taken by the great eighteenth century German philosopher, Kant.

Such a general rule is obviously merely formal. Before it can be applied we must know what is right. For practical guidance Kant enunciated his well-known 'Categorical Imperative'—"Act as if the maxim of your action were by your will to be raised to a universal law,"¹ that is, as he explains, so that such an application of the maxim would not lead to contradictions in which it would disappear.

¹ *Metaphysic of Morals*, Sect. ii.

If this were meant to be adopted by individuals in particular actions, it would seem to say no more than that each should will that in exactly the same circumstances all other persons should act in the way he judges right; which leaves the possible variety of human judgements exactly where it was before. If, on the other hand, it were meant as a justification for such maxims of conduct as dogmatic intuitionism assumes to be self-evident, and a court of appeal when they conflict, it is as sterile as it is formal.

Kant thus exemplifies the deduction of maxims from the categorical imperative. "May a person, he asks, retain for himself a possession which has been entrusted to him without a receipt or other acknowledgement? He answers, No. For he thinks, were the opposite maxim to be raised to a law, nobody, under such circumstances, would entrust anything to anybody. The law would then be without possibility of application, therefore impracticable and so self-abrogated.

"It may easily be seen that Kant's argumentation is false, indeed absurd. If, in consequence of the law, certain actions ceased to be practised, the law exercises an influence; it therefore still exists and has in no way annulled itself. How ridiculous would it appear if the following question were treated after an analogous fashion: 'May I yield to a person who desires to bribe me?' Yes, since, were I to think of the opposite maxim as raised to a universal law, then nobody would seek any longer to bribe another; therefore, the law would be without application, therefore impracticable, and so self-abrogated."¹

Mere formal self-consistency, then, does not prove a maxim to be a right rule of conduct. Both moral and immoral rules may stand that test. So it is evident that something more than Kant's principle is needed, and that

something is found in the valuation of the whole action as good or as bad.

3. **Moral Law.**

(i) **DEVELOPMENT.**—Though it cannot be granted that maxims of conduct need no justification outside their own terms, yet it is a salient fact of experience that such maxims are current in every community and are generally held to be binding. By them conduct is guided. They have been gradually evolved and moulded, and they express the average judgement of the men and women of to-day. They form part of the spiritual environment into which each person is born, and they are assimilated with the speech, manners, and general knowledge, of the circle in which he moves. No study of ethical doctrines is necessary as a preliminary to practical morality any more than a study of mechanics is needed before one can make use of those useful levers, the arms and the legs.

This common currency of moral rules does not involve that they are equally real to everybody. Like all other rules of action they are only to be understood by practice. Just as a man who has never played cricket cannot fully appreciate directions for batting or bowling, so one who has never sought to promote goodness in himself and others, but has followed selfish impulses all his life, is little able to comprehend the value of rules which make for the realization of a good he has never learnt to seek. In proportion to the fullness and perfection of the moral life are insight into moral maxims and sensitiveness to moral obligations.

In every community there are always many stages of clearness in the recognition of both the implications and the force of moral law. At the bottom are those to whom Stephen's description is applicable: "The most civilized country includes numerous savages, who are in it but not of it, foreign matters contained in the organism, and such that

it would fall to pieces were it not for their restraint by the more civilized members of the community." ¹ At the top are saints whose whole energies are spent in the realization of goodness. Between the extremes are many intermediate levels which shade imperceptibly into one another.

Similar gradations appear when we survey the course of history. We find that morality has been gradually developed. From primitive peoples among whom right is identified with tribal custom to the highest levels of moral cultivation attained by men is a succession of stages, showing on the whole a general upward movement, though not a uniform or constant improvement. In this the progress of morality resembles the progress of science. Experience brings increased insight, but at no time is there a uniform amount of insight among the members of any community.

If we regard only the external forms of conduct imposed by custom, public opinion, or legal enactment, it might seem that morality is nothing but a product of social evolution, and this is the doctrine of evolutionary ethics. But such a view omits the keynote of the whole, which is the sense of obligation. Not a *must*, but an *ought*, has to be explained.

External forces may secure conformity to external rules, but in mere conformity is no seed of progress. As Professor Sorley remarks: "It is because men have looked upon custom as binding that they can proceed to criticize it and come to think of a different standard for morality." ² Moral progress is due to the recognition of obligation to seek the good. Every moral reformer starts from the highest conception of morality of his day; he sees some defect in it, and suggests changes from which improvement may be anticipated. He advocates, not a fresh start from nothing, but a modification of what is already accepted.

¹ *The Science of Ethics*, p. 138.

² *Moral Values and the Idea of God*, p. 67.

So only can he make disciples. His preaching must meet with something kindred to it in the minds of his hearers—a discontent however vague, and an equally vague longing for some higher good.

(ii) NATURE.—Growth in morality implies increased insight into the means by which the highest good is to be realized. Morality is not made by man, but discovered by him. For morality is nothing but the means by which he advances towards the perfection of his nature. Thus the laws of morality are inherent in the spiritual nature of man. To violate them is to contradict the rational self.

As means to the realization of the highest good they may also be regarded as expressions of the divine will. For the laws of God, as revealed in this world, are not arbitrary enactments, but are determined in every case by the nature of the subject. The divine law is that each creature should attain the highest realization of its nature. That law is expressed for man in the precept "Be ye perfect."

Appetites and sensuous impulses show the workings of the laws of the animal nature. In the lower animals these may be the sufficient laws of their being. But man not only has such impulses, but knows their character and can see towards what ends they are directed. So with him they are more than impulses: they are modes of conscious seeking for some form of sensuous gratification. Hence comes possibility of conflict between them and the end demanded by the spiritual nature. Morality is the decision of that conflict in favour of the truer and higher self, not by annihilation of the lower impulses—for they too are parts of personality—but by the transforming them into instruments for the accomplishment of spiritual purposes.

Here is found the explanation of the sense of obligation which attends recognition of a moral law. It is the demand of the spiritual nature to hold that dominant place which is inherent in the instrumental relation of body to spirit.

(iii) **EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL LAW.**—Moral laws, then, are statements of the means by which the highest good may be realized by human endeavour. Such realization is progressive, not only by each individual person but by mankind as a whole. Thus, moral laws do not remain unchanged, but become increasingly spiritual both in expression and in implication.

Conduct is the expression of personality. But conduct is external and obvious. So the earliest form of a moral law is always a simple rule of conduct. Generally it is negative, forbidding some action which is recognized as wrong—"Thou shalt not kill," "Thou shalt not steal," and so on.

Mere obedience to external command, however, is not itself morality, but only a condition favourable to the development of morality. Repeated conduct affects the mental attitude, so that continued willing abstinence from forbidden acts, or continued willing performance of prescribed acts, tends to form a habitual inclination to avoid, or to do, them. This inevitably comes about when an external rule is recognized as right, and such recognition attends the apprehension of its tendency to avoid what is evil and to secure what is good. Then the inner self finds means of expression in obedience to the external law. So external law gradually passes into internal principle. "Thou shalt not kill" is transmuted into "Thou shalt bear no malice nor hatred in thy heart"; "Thou shalt not steal" into "Thou shalt be true and just in all thy dealings."

(iv) **MORAL AND POLITICAL LAW.**—Laws imposed by the community can pass in this way into inner principles of life because society is not merely something outside us and able by its superior strength to impose its will upon us, but is the spiritual atmosphere in which we live. Apart from society we have no real selves. For we are not in part individual and in part social, but our very individuality is what it is because of the society in which we have grown up and from

which we have drawn spiritual sustenance. It follows that the community has the right, as well as the power, to direct in what way we shall live as parts of that wider whole.

Nevertheless, the laws of a community are not necessarily identical with moral laws. Men may do wrong when they act in concert as well as when they act individually. Legal enactment can never turn wrong into right. As Stephen put it: "whereas the law of the land is determined by the will of the legislature, the moral law is as independent of the legislature as the movements of the planets."¹

Doubtless, on the whole, the laws of a country are expressions of the moral insight of the majority of its subjects, and any legal enactment which runs counter to common moral feeling speedily becomes a dead letter. But a majority has no divine right to infallibility, and in any one point the opinion of the majority may be wrong in the eyes of a minority. Then those who recognize what to them appears as the higher law have no alternative but to accept the penal consequences of disobedience. The early Christians were morally bound to disobey the law of the Roman Empire to offer worship to the emperor and to the pagan gods. In our own day cases may arise in which the State permits what the moral law forbids, or prohibits what the moral law enjoins. A man must satisfy himself that his opposition is based on insight and reasoned conviction, not on mere prejudice; but, having so assured himself, he must hold himself ready on occasion to disobey the law and to face the consequences.

(v) PRINCIPLES OF CHARACTER.—Only those external laws, then, which are seen to be means towards the realization of good can pass into internal principles. At any time both the external and the internal aspect may be operative. Respect for the opinion of others is a potent auxiliary to the inward prompting of principle. It is evident that, in so far

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 149.

as an inner principle takes the place of an external rule, the scope of its application is enormously increased. Rules of conduct must specify definite actions and leave a far larger number untouched, but an inner principle finds expression in a great variety of actions inspired by it. Every such action accords with some special formulation of the general principle.

This very transmutation of external rules into internal principles implies clearer insight into what good is thereby to be realized. The acceptance of truthfulness as a principle of conduct means much more than avoidance of lying. The internal law to love one's neighbour as oneself, even when his conduct shows him to be one's enemy, penetrates much more deeply into the relations of the individual to his fellows than does the more primitive rule to do good to one's friends and harm to one's enemies.

To regulate conduct by external law demands an ever-increasing complexity of rules. On the other hand, internal principles become progressively systematized under wider and more general principles. To quote Stephen's illustration: "The difference between the two methods is like the difference between marking a circle by the revolution of a fixed line round a given centre and trying to make an approximate circle by causing a number of other figures drawn from external points to intersect in such a way as more or less to indicate the circumference of the circle."¹

By transmutation of rules of conduct into principles of character, morality becomes at once simpler and more comprehensive. The ultimate principles of love of God and love of our fellows cover every possibility of life. For, love rightly means not the occasional and specific emotion to which the name is often limited, but a constant affection determining the will. It finds a fit occasion, therefore, in

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 157.

every conceivable set of circumstances. Hence, though general, such principles are not abstract.

(vi) SUMMARY.—Moral laws, then, are laws of man's spiritual nature and, as such, are ultimately principles of character determining modes of conduct. Such principles are as constant as is the need for the good to which they give expression. Development occurs in the apprehension of them by mankind, and in the consequent formulation of external rules of action, but such development implies that the ultimate principles themselves are invariable. They are consequently universal and supreme, for they are in no sense dependent on the desires or insight of individuals. They are not self-evident premises from which modes of action are deduced. On the contrary, they are apprehended through an inductive process which takes into account all the pertinent facts of moral consciousness, and by analysis, finds what principles are embedded in them. That is the work of great moral teachers and reformers, and to them actual progress in morality is mainly due.

4. Evil.

(i) SIN.

(a) *Nature of Sin.*—Man's spiritual nature requires that he should seek to realize the highest good possible to him, and should in consequence act on right principles. But there is no constraint. Man can gainsay his true nature, and has done so throughout the ages. There is no clearer proof that he is free than the fact that he sins. Plants and animals necessarily follow the laws of their being. But man can violate the law of his life, the following of which alone enables him to realize what is in him to become.

Sin is thus seen to be essentially perversion of the will, and, as such, it vitiates the whole personality. For the will is the personality in action. If sin is persisted in, evil habits are formed, and the whole being becomes increasingly evil.

Spiritual disease is as real and as contagious as is physical disease. And as the one, if unchecked, ends in bodily death, so the other leads towards spiritual death—the state of the man in whom aspirations towards good are no longer felt. Nor are such people unknown. As the late Sir John Seeley pointed out: “There is a class of men in every community in whom both natural and Christian humanity is at the lowest ebb. These will not only do nothing for their kind, but they are capable of committing crimes against society and against those nearest to them. Under temptation from self-interest they actually commit such crimes, and the precedent being once established, they for the most part fall gradually into the condition of avowed enemies of their kind, and constitute a criminal or outcast class, which is not merely destitute of virtue but is, as it were, an Evil Church sustaining its evil by its union and propagating its anarchic law on every side. In exceptional cases men equally devoid of virtue are restrained by prudence or timidity or fortunate circumstances from committing grave crimes, and remain in the midst of the good undetected or tolerated but not morally better than the outcast on whom all turn their backs.”¹ The Italian Renaissance may be cited as a striking historical illustration. “Egotism is the leading characteristic of the men of the Renaissance, when the conscience of the individual, like the moral conception of law in the State, was destroyed.”²

(b) *Experience of Sin.*—The persistent sinner, then, is a fact of experience. But we all know that there is much more than this. A tendency to sin is inherent in every person. We know it in ourselves, and we find abundant evidence of it in the lives of our fellows, both when they act individually and when they act as communities. Nor is experience dumb as to the disastrous consequences of sin.

¹ *Ecce Homo*, ch. xix., cf. pp. 115-116.

² Gregorovius: *History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages*, Eng. trans., vol. vii., p. 430.

Sin is the most significant of facts, and a doctrine of ethics which ignores it stands condemned from the standpoint of experience. For ethics has the moral life for its material, and what that life would be were there no sin we cannot conceive. We must take life as it is, and in actual life all advance is made through victory in the constant struggle against temptation to do evil.

It is said that the men and women of to-day think little about their sins. In so far as it means that life is not spent in morbid brooding and self-torment, this is well. But in so far as it implies that the eyes are shut to the real nature of sin, and that it is cloaked as misfortune, or at the worst, folly or defective prudence, it is a refusal to see facts as they are which is of ill omen for the moral life.

Sin is the great evil in society as in individuals. As Bishop Gore says: "The obstacles to progress in every class are within rather than without; they lie in jealousy, in suspicion, in self-assertion, in lust, in dishonesty, in carelessness—in a word in sin. In sin, in the omnipresent fact of sin, there is the evil. In redemption, redemption from sin, there is the central and fundamental remedy and the thing supremely needful."¹

(ii) **SUFFERING.**—That sin entails physical as well as moral evils also needs no theoretical demonstration. Of that, too, experience supplies abundant evidence. To quote Dr. Illingworth's summary statement: "Gluttony and drunkenness and anger, and impurity and sloth, acting and interacting through a thousand generations, have created and spread diseases which would never otherwise have been; while pride and avarice, by exaggerating wealth and intensifying want, have increased their harm."²

So with sins of nations. Oppression of one community

¹ *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, p. 38.

² *Christian Character*, p. 3.

by another leads to untold misery and suffering. Every war carries in its train pestilence and famine, wholesale destruction of human life and mutilation of human bodies, devastation of whole regions and wide-spread annihilation of the means of supplying even the most elementary human needs. And every war is the outcome and the expression of moral disease in at least one of the combatants. "The evil that men do lives after them." Sin looms as large in the history of nations as in the lives of individual men and women.

But the sins of nations are always sins of the men who compose them. A community has no personality apart from its members. Sin is, therefore, emphatically an individual rejection of the good. That is why all social reform must be the work of individual wills, and must proceed through the conquest of sin in individual lives.

Much of the physical evil in the world is, then, the outcome of sin. But not all. That there is suffering which cannot be explained thus is undeniable. Illness and pain are experienced by the best as by the worst of mankind. And all suffering is ill for the bodily life. If this settled the question, the problem presented by the existence of sin and suffering would be not simply unsolved but insoluble. When we remember, however, that the true test of value is to be sought in the spiritual life, we see that we must pierce beneath the surface, and inquire into the effects of suffering and sin on the life of the soul.

(iii) DISCIPLINARY FUNCTION.—This leads us to see the direction in which a solution of the problem of evil is to be sought. Experience gives not only the fact of suffering, but the fact of moral values realized through suffering. Fortitude and patience, tender sympathy, submission to the divine will and reliance on divine help, cheerfulness of heart and not merely of circumstance, are fruits of suffering borne in the right spirit. As Dr. Illingworth truly remarks:

“It is thus a simple fact of experience that, in our present sinful state, pain and sorrow are among the most powerful factors in the development of character.”¹

In possibility of sin, too, is possibility of increase of moral values. Sin, in itself, is wholly evil. Every time sin is committed the sinner cuts himself off from good, and he must return through sincere repentance before he can again live the life which is in the truest sense natural to him. And repentance means much more than mere regret or remorse. That usually has closer reference to unpleasant results of the sin than to the sin itself; it looks at the deed as a fact rather than as a personal act. In repentance, on the other hand, the sin is regarded more on its inner side. It is the wrong disposition, the weakness of will, the delight in the evil done, which are lamented as the root of the ill. This leads to the resolve to amend, which is the second essential element in repentance. The dominant feeling is that the springs of life must be purified, the affections set on what is good. So the cry of the repentant soul is ever: “Make me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

This sequence—fall, repentance, renewal—is experienced by all who try to make the good real in their own lives. From it springs that true humility which recognizes the actual relation of the self to goodness. There is a false humility which abases—or feigns to abase—the self before other men; which puts forth a lower estimate of personal worth than is justified by facts. True humility does not express a felt relation to men. It is a recognition of how far what the personal life *is* falls short of what it *ought to be*. It is no hypocrisy which makes a St. Paul speak of himself as “chief of sinners,” for the greater the advance in the life of holiness the more apparent is the discrepancy between the

¹ *Christian Character*, p. 55

actually attained and the ideally desired. It is the hardened heart that feels no need for repentance. The saint is sensitive to deviations from the standard of righteousness which are non-existent for crasser consciences.

(iv) **THE STRUGGLE FOR MORALITY.**—The moral life, then, is a life of incessant struggle. It is not easy to be a good man. Doubtless, with perseverance comes the growth of habit. Rejection of evil solicitations of the senses as surely becomes habitual by practice as does indulgence. So the grosser forms of sin may cease to be temptations. But the increased moral sensitiveness makes the real character of other promptings of desire plainer; temptation is found to lurk where it was formerly unsuspected. Thus, the struggle against evil in the self never ceases. Yet victory paves the way to victory. The general habit of shunning sin becomes stronger at the same time as spiritual insight more surely detects its presence.

Both sin and suffering, then, call for that effort in which the moral life essentially consists. Through it alone are developed the moral values of character—those modes of activity which we know and approve as virtues.

Nor can we conceive how they could be developed otherwise. "I will hazard the statement," writes Professor Sorley, "that an imperfect world is necessary for the growth and training of moral beings."¹

It is, then, in the conception of the world as a place of training in which, through stress of combat, good is gradually and progressively realized, that we find the answer to the 'riddle of the universe' presented by sin and suffering. And the combat calls both the individual and the race. Each must attend the school of life, whether or no he will to learn its lessons.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 347.

CHAPTER VIII.

REALIZATION OF GOOD (ii).

1. Conscience.

(i) ITS NATURE.—We have considered the nature of the good and the kind of conduct through which good is realized, and we have found that universal law, transmuted into principles of personal character, is the directive force of the moral life. We have considered further how that life is affected by evil in the world. Throughout, attention has been fixed more on the universal morality to which the individual responds, or fails to respond, than on the mode of the response. To that we must now turn, and look at the same relation between the good and the personality in which it is to be realized from the side of the individual.

That man has always been able to apprehend the difference between good and evil, right and wrong, sufficiently to prevent human life from being wholly determined by the blind unreason of animal desire is proved by the fact of moral advance. Out of nothing, nothing can come. From a consciousness utterly devoid of capacity to distinguish between good and evil the moral experience of mankind could never have developed. This capacity is what is meant by *Conscience*. Conscience is the activity of the whole personality directed upon questions of valuation and of the adaptation of means to end; that is, upon questions of good and evil, right and wrong.

A remnant of the discredited psychological theory that each human capacity or faculty is a distinct and independent organ of life has lingered longer in respect of conscience than of other capacities, such as reason, imagination, feeling, volition. The independence of the names suggested a corresponding independence of the powers named, for which examination of the spiritual life yields no justification. The personality wills, reasons, feels; and each activity involves the others. And the personality attempts the solution of moral problems and passes moral judgements.

Each capacity is always exercised in concrete situations. As we will some definite end, think out some definite question, imagine some definite scene or event, feel some definite affection towards some definite person or thing, so we always deal in conscience with some definite situation. Reason may be applied to questions of general ethical doctrine, but that is not an activity of conscience. Such activity occurs only when we consider either what we have done at a certain time in the past, or what we are to do in the immediate future.

Conscience, then, is not a mysterious power, implanted in us complete at birth, which acts as judge on our doings. If it were, its decisions would not be *our* decisions. Such a conception, indeed, is cognate to that of a liberty of indifference, and is open to similar objections.¹

On the contrary, conscience is as complex as personality. By it we feel sorrow for wrong-doing—a sorrow we speak of as ‘the pangs of conscience’—which is the reaction of the spiritual self upon some voluntary act originating in part of the personality, and which is in opposition to the true nature of humanity in which we all share. It judges the act by the universal standard of right, which has been accepted as a principle of character, and condemns it. It wills that such violation of the true law of human nature shall be suppressed

¹ Cf. pp. 41-43.

in the future. Thus, in the words of Cardinal Newman, "Conscience implies a relation between the soul and a something exterior, and that, moreover, superior to itself; a relation to an excellence which it does not possess, and to a tribunal over which it has no power."¹ If the analysis be pushed home this supreme authority is seen to be God. So Wordsworth was justified when he spoke of conscience

"As God's most intimate Presence in the soul
And His most perfect Image in the world."²

(ii) ITS EDUCATION.

(a) *Necessity of Education.*—As conscience is the realization of the relation between the individual and the supreme good to which his own nature bears witness, it follows that it needs education.

The judgements of conscience reflect the stage of moral development reached by the whole personality. Morality is first apprehended as obedience to external rules; so the judgements of conscience are first evoked by overt acts. As the rules are assimilated and become transformed into principles of character, the judgements of conscience refer more and more to inward dispositions and intentions. First the expression of the will in act is judged, then the will itself.

(b) *Insight.*—Moreover, conscience is efficient in proportion to insight, and insight requires cultivation. To judge rightly how we should act in given circumstances it is needful that the real character of those circumstances should be apprehended, and the kind of action for which they call be perceived. Such insight no more comes unsought than does insight into physical events. The slow and laborious advance in understanding even the simplest and commonest occurrences in nature should be a sufficient warning not to expect to possess spiritual insight without the labour of acquiring it. Not that this implies that the conscience of the unlearned is less

¹ *University Sermons*, ii.

² *Excursion*, iv.

trustworthy than that of the learned. Every person has constant spiritual experiences, and everybody who honestly tries to learn what it is right to seek and to do succeeds to the extent of his real effort. The good life is as open to the simple as to the cultivated intellect, but to neither does the vision of it come unsought.

(c) *Sensitiveness*.—The most sensitive conscience is that which has the clearest insight into the nature of each separate deed, whether it be an action done in the material world, or the thought or imagination of such an act. For the true object of its judgements is always some phase of the personal life. Thus, the planning of evil, or the finding pleasure in the picturing of evil, is as subject to condemnation as is the actual doing of the evil; though the condemnation is not always quite the same in kind or in degree. For there is a wide gap, and often an impassable gulf, between imagination, or even planning, and execution. A man may even feel assured 'at the back of his mind' that when the time comes he will not do the evil thing.

But a distinction must be drawn. Evil imaginations will occur to us. In other words, we cannot escape temptation. It is not the occurrence of an evil idea, but the cherishing and accepting it, which is sin. If we do accept it, and circumstances prevent the execution, or resolution fail when the time for action arrives, this does not cleanse the soul from the sin already committed in thought, though the additional sin of carrying out the evil purpose is escaped.

(d) *Bad Education*.—Conscience, then, needs to be trained and educated by constant practice in passing judgements on our own acts. But bad education is possible here as in all other departments of life. One may habituate oneself to refuse to see the real nature of one's evil deeds—to look upon them as misfortunes or mistakes when they entail displeasing consequences, and to hold them justified when no regrettable results ensue. Such an attitude towards life is

easily fallen into by one who is wholly immersed in the material calls of business or pleasure. His gaze is so constantly directed outwards that he considers only external results, and them he measures by a material standard. He never finds time to attend to his own spiritual health. Experience furnishes analogous cases of neglect of bodily health. These, indeed, are more obvious, for bodily disease sooner or later forces itself into notice. But spiritual disease is a kind of creeping paralysis of the soul. The conscience becomes progressively weaker and inert, till it is so deadened and stultified that it raises no protest against even the worst of sins.¹

(iii) SHAM CONSCIENCES.—It is possible, too, to assume that the immediate judgements we pass on conduct are warranted even when the grounds on which they are made have never been examined. Prejudice is often confused with conscience. We have assimilated without reflexion many opinions from others, or we have formed them according to our individual likings. So it comes to pass that, as Sydney Smith put it, "there is no fantasy, however wild, that a man may not persuade himself that he cherishes from motives of conscience."²

Such spurious 'consciences' are especially active in judging the actions of others, and this, in itself, is evidence that they are not what they masquerade as being. For conscience is not concerned at all with the doings of other people, but only with one's own personal acts. When submitted to examination such pseudo-consciences are found to be organs of self-justification and self-excuse. They may prohibit men from spending their energies or their means in helping their fellows, but they are complacent towards their own desires and inclinations. They are active in restricting the liberty of others, but often passive in face of personal license.

¹ Cf. p. 122.

² *Peter Plymley's Letters*, iv.

(iv) ITS AUTHORITY.—The education of conscience is seen to be the internal side of moral progress. By conscience we judge our characters as manifested in our deeds, and thus make clear to ourselves our defects and the direction in which specific improvement should be sought. It is for each one of us the supreme court of appeal. Nobody ever is justified in acting in opposition to his conscience.

The decision in any one case may be wrong, but such an error is made manifest by the result actually achieved. When that is seen to be evil, the evil can be traced to its source, in misunderstanding of the situation, in mistaken valuation of the end sought, or in defect of intelligent foresight in planning the means. Thus insight is increased, and a similar error is more likely to be avoided in the future. The claim that conscience is supreme does not imply that it is infallible. Indeed, so far is this from being the case that a conscience in a low state of development is very liable to decide wrongly. Were it not so, there would be no need for educating the conscience. But whenever a man conscientiously believes that he is called upon to act in a certain way, that is the form in which good and right appear to him. To act in opposition to his conscience would be to do deliberately what he conceives as evil. Of course, it is always important to make sure that the inner voice is that of conscience, and not that of mere prejudice or inclination; that it is the judgement of the whole self, not of some of the lower elements in the self.

We speak of conscience more especially in reference to the past. It is in looking back on what we have done that we experience the most characteristic manifestation of conscience in pain of disapproval. But it is not always pain and condemnation; we may conscientiously approve what we did, and such approval carries with it a feeling of peace. This feeling of satisfaction is neither so specific in character nor so strongly marked as are the pains of a condemnatory conscience. These may drive a man to despair, and have, in

fact, led not a few to seek relief from them in suicide. Yet, though not vehement, the joy of an approving conscience is an encouragement to persist in well-doing.

The activity of conscience, however, is not limited to the past. The service it renders to the moral life by judging acts already done is rather negative than positive. It emphatically tells us what to avoid. With reference to the future its function is positive. Conscience demands moral progress. We judge before we act, and the judgement shows what the act should be. We may allow inclination or weakened resolution to turn us from the way indicated, but if we do so we suffer the pangs of an unquiet conscience—a conscience which will not cease from protesting, and so will not let us be at peace while we ignore its dictates.

Conscience, then, is the rightful lord of conduct. In the words of Bishop Butler: "Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority; it would absolutely govern the world."¹

2. Duty.

(i) OBLIGATION.—Conscience enunciates the moral law within our own souls as a law which it is incumbent on us to obey. This obligation rests at bottom on the fact that the moral law is the law of that spiritual nature of humanity in which each of us shares.

But before moral law dawned on our own consciousness it existed in the society into which we were born. Thus, each person first learns the law as something outside himself demanding his obedience. Moreover obedience is enforced by various social penalties. A child must obey his parents or he will be punished, and for him his parents embody society. As he enters into more direct relations with the wider community outside the family, he is still subject to the pressure of public opinion and even of public law. Deviation

¹ *Sermons*, ii.

from the course marked out brings upon him some manifestation of social disapproval.

Were the moral law the creation of society, obedience would never be other than compulsory. The individual would feel that he *must* obey, but not that he *ought* to do so. It is only because moral law is the law of man's spiritual nature, which mankind has gradually discovered, that it appeals to him as right. Any law of the State, or custom sanctioned by society, which is not thus derived and so does not evoke such a response of the self, remains an external force, and if obeyed at all, is obeyed either through compulsion or through complaisance, but without recognition of obligation.

(ii) NATURE OF DUTY.—Obligation to obey the moral law is known as *Duty*. A duty is primarily what we owe. An obligation may be brought home to us by force, but only when it is brought home is it recognized as duty.

Duty, then, has both an external and an internal aspect. Externally it expresses the legitimate demands made upon us by others. Internally it implies acceptance of those claims. There is obviously room for disagreement. An individual may reject a claim made upon him, and deny that it is his duty. Those who make the claim may insist on its validity. Such a conflict can be rightly solved only by analysis of the claim in relation to him on whom it is made. If it really expresses a moral law, its fulfilment is right and, therefore, obligatory: if it expresses mere custom, then in itself it has no binding force. But the general principle that the individual should accept the claims made on him by the society of which he is a member, unless those claims are wrong in themselves, would lead to the decision to fulfil them. The appeal of the individual is to his own conscience, but whenever he deliberately rejects a social claim he should make sure that it is conscience, and not mere personal convenience, that guides him.

Speaking generally, public opinion, on which social claims are based, is the result of the moral thought of mankind. So the presumption always is that in a case of conflict it is right and the recalcitrant individual wrong. As has been seen, it is easy to mistake prejudice and inclination for conscience. In deciding whether to fulfil or to reject a social claim full weight should be given to this consideration.

(iii) DUTIES AND RIGHTS.—Modern times are marked by insistence on individual rights. Men are vociferous about them, but they speak much less of their duties. Yet the two are correlative. A person has rights, not as an isolated individual but as a member of society. It is true that society is composed of a number of individuals, but they live in a network of social relations, constituted and maintained by various social institutions. Only in such relations does an individual exist at all. His spiritual life is as dependent upon them as is his bodily life. So it is that only in fulfilment of the duties involved in those relations can he develop his capacities.

It follows that it is meaningless to speak of rights belonging to a man simply and solely through his bare existence. A man's rights express one side of his relations to others; the other side is expressed by corresponding duties. If either side be ignored, or even unduly depressed, the social relations are vitiated, and the community is torn by dissensions.

If we take any particular duty, say that of telling the truth, we see that correlative to it is the right to be esteemed trustworthy. On the opposite side are the rights of others not to be deceived, and the duty of believing what they are told by a trustworthy person. In such an instance it is obvious that failure in the duty destroys the right. So it is throughout.

Or consider a right of which much has been heard—the right of a workman to a fair day's wages. Such a right can be established only on the ground that in return he fulfils

the duty of doing a fair day's work. The right of the workman is correlative not only with the duty of his employer to pay him such a wage, but even more directly with his own duty to earn it. There is, indeed, no more elementary requirement of morality than that when a man undertakes a task he should carry it out to the best of his ability. Looked at on the employer's side the duty to pay reasonable wages carries with it the right to receive a reasonable return in work.

(iv) OCCASIONS OF DUTY.—The general aspect of social duty, then, is the fulfilment of all the legitimate demands made on the individual by the community. Such demands are partly explicit and partly implicit, and they are different for each person. For a duty is always some particular thing to be done. It is found in actual action. And particular acts are called for by the particular circumstances of each individual life. Doubtless, there are features of general resemblance which make it possible to class situations roughly, and so to speak of specific forms of duty. But these are only abstractions. They correspond to the external maxims in which the moral law is first apprehended. In such a list a particular duty is simply the kind of conduct usually called for by a certain type of situation.

Only in such a way can there be explicit public recognition of the binding force of duty. And the importance of this cannot be exaggerated. The great majority of mankind can trust neither themselves nor others to keep to the narrow way unless it be fenced with positive commands and prohibitions. That others judge us by our fulfilment, or neglect, of what are accepted by public opinion as duties, is a help in doing them by no means to be despised.

Nevertheless, no situation merely reproduces a type, and in many cases it is a practical difficulty to see what is the demand of duty. Always duty is as concrete as the situation which calls for it, a truth which any attempt to draw out a

list of duties as a part of ethical theory tends to obscure. The true state of the case is well put by Mr. Bradley: "To be a good man in all things and everywhere, to try to do always the best, and to do one's best in it, whether in lonely work or in social relaxation to suppress the worse self and realize the good self, this and nothing short of this is the dictate of morality."¹

(v) DUTY AND DESIRE.—We all know, however, that difficult as it is at times to see what our duty is, it is often yet more difficult to do it. Duty frequently calls for some form of self-denial or self-sacrifice, and is thus found in conflict with desire. Some moralists have gone so far as to regard this opposition as inevitable, and practically to identify duty with the disagreeable. In common parlance, too, this is often implied. Were it so, either duty or desire must rule the life; there could be no accommodation between them. Hedonism is at bottom the making desire the dominant force in life. Asceticism, on the other hand, attempts to annihilate desire in the name of duty.

So long as the term is restricted to the 'desires of the flesh' experience makes it plain that these frequently do oppose the sense of duty. But there are other desires. At bottom, a desire is the expression of some need of our nature, and the spiritual nature has needs as surely as the bodily nature. There is desire for knowledge, desire for beauty, desire for holiness, as truly as there is desire for immediate gratification of the senses, or for riches and power to secure permanently all kinds of bodily satisfactions. And desire grows into habit in the same way as does every active power. When the attainment of the highest possible good is set forth as the true purpose of life it is implied that it can be made the object of desire. And so far as the good is desired the means to its attainment are desired. It follows that the

¹ *Ethical Studies*, p. 194.

true course of moral development is the progressive relating of desire to moral excellence.

With perseverance the association becomes closer and stronger. Yet none would venture to claim that in his own life there is complete identification of all the objects of his desire with ultimate good. As has already been said, we are never freed from temptation. Some conflict between duty and desire remains even in the holiest saint.

(vi) SELF-DISCIPLINE.—This leads us to see the need of self-discipline, which means such denial of lower desires as is helpful in so training them that they become the servants of the will to do well. The true relation between the spiritual life and bodily desires is not the complete suppression of the latter, but the subordination of them to desires for what is good. The body and its impulses are not evil in themselves; evil comes through misuse of them. Perfection of life implies the harmonizing of the desires and needs of the body with those of the soul.

(vii) DUTY AS INTERNAL.—Yet so long as duty appears to the individual as mainly a set of external claims it is incompletely conceived. Just as external moral laws must be transmuted into internal principles of character, so, that recognition of the obligation to obey moral laws which we call duty must be transformed into the obligation to follow out internal principles. For duty is the realization of the law of our true being. This is implied, indeed, when it is said that one's duty is always to do the best one can in the circumstances in which one has to act, for no combination of external claims can ever adequately express the complexity of actual situations. This brings home to us from another point of view the truths that to live well is not an easy matter, and that the effort to do so is never completely successful. Seeley, indeed, remarks: "Duty, in short, as it presents itself to us, is a very complicated matter. To do it with certainty a man must not be good merely but wise. He must have re-

flected deeply on human affairs and on social laws; he must have reduced the confusion of good feelings which exists at starting in the well-disposed mind to order and clearness."¹

3. **Virtue.**

(i) **NATURE.**—In its highest form duty has become a principle of character. Yet, even so, attention is still fixed rather on the actions than on the persons who do them. Thus, duty always retains an implication of legalism and constraint. To act from a sense of duty implies explicit recognition of obligation. Duty expresses service, but does not necessarily imply love.

Duty, therefore, is not a complete expression of morality. There remains the most fundamental question of all as to the internal disposition from which dutiful action springs. So long as this is the sense of obligation, duty has not been refined into virtue, or love for the good. Virtue does not ask what is required, but what is possible. It is a steady quiet enthusiasm for goodness, which constantly seeks opportunity to manifest itself in good deeds. Thus, virtue completes the transition from outer law to inner principle. The advance is made from external compulsion, through felt obligation, to inspiration by love of the good.

Virtue is a characteristic of the whole active character. It is a constant valuation of ends, a constant direction of the will, a constant striving to realize in action the greatest possible good. So it finds partial expression in every kind of action. It seeks the good both in the personal life and in the social life. Yet virtue does not imply impeccability. The virtuous man may do evil deeds, as the vicious man may do good deeds. But such deeds are exceptional. They spring from occasional impulse, not from the ruling principle of life. The virtuous man repents and amends, because his

¹ *Ecce Homo*, ch. ix.

permanent will is to do right. He thus makes his very lapses stepping-stones to higher things. Nevertheless, though a habitual virtuous disposition does not exclude the possibility of sin it makes good conduct increasingly easy. Both well-doing and repentance of evil-doing are easier to the virtuous man than to him who has no enthusiasm for righteousness.

Virtuous acts are not one class of acts among others. Virtue is as omnipresent in life as is duty. No matter what the situation, there is a best way of meeting it; to follow this is duty, to desire and seek it is virtue. In virtue desire is identified with the good will. Common speech often implies that to act virtuously is a higher and better thing than to fulfil duty. This is true when the acts are definitely referred to a person; a virtuous man has advanced further in the moral life than the merely dutiful man. But apart from personal disposition, the external act dictated by duty is the same as that prompted by virtue.

(ii) THE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

(a) *Origin of Classification.*—Virtue, then, is a constant factor in the good life finding partial manifestation in every right action. In full detail all actions are unique. Yet, as has been seen, they may be classed roughly on the basis of relations prominent in them. Such classification yields specific moral laws and lists of specific duties, or calls for obedience to such laws. Corresponding to such external grouping may be a grouping of the internal springs of action. Thus arises the conception of 'Virtues,' as embodiments of virtue, or specific forms of good disposition.

Here, however, attention is not fixed on the external situations but on the inner springs of action. So a classification of virtues implies a psychological analysis. Plato attempted the task, and divided the active powers into appetite, assertive spirit, and reason. Each shows a specific form of excellence. So arose the cardinal—or primary—virtues of *Temperance, Courage, and Wisdom*. Excellence of

life as a whole was found in the due harmonizing of these, so that each plays its proper part. This is *Justice*, regarded as a quality of the individual soul. Corresponding virtues were found in the ideal State. Wisdom is the virtue of the rulers who act as the intellect of the community; courage that of the soldiers who embody its assertive spirit; temperance, shown in due submission to authority, that of the mass of the people, who represent the appetites and sensuous impulses of the individual soul; justice the doing by each of his own work.

(b) *In Modern Life*.—Interesting as this analysis is, it assumes the independent completeness of the Greek City State, and, by analogy, the self-sufficiency of the individual man. The conditions of modern States differ enormously from those of Athens and Sparta in the time of Plato, and social relations now are immeasurably more complex. Modern virtue has to be manifested in modern conditions. Moreover, the influence of Christian ethics is nowhere more manifest than in the denial that any individual is self-sufficing. The ideal of our times is not the philosopher who is the "spectator of all time and of all existence," but the man of approved and successful activity. The modern conception of virtue connects it immediately with conduct, and finds the highest intrinsic value in goodness of life. In Greek thought man realized the highest good possible to him in philosophical speculation. Such an ideal could arise only in a social organization in which a small leisured class of free citizens was supported by a great body of slave labour. The free citizen alone was held to be capable of virtue; the mass of the people was negligible. No disquisition is needed to show how far removed this is from modern thought.

Yet the fact that for over two thousand years moralists generally have been content to retain the cardinal virtues as convenient stand-points from which to survey the good life shows that the psychological analysis on which they are based contains truth. Of course, the names do not now carry

exactly their original implications. Each expresses an internal relation which is manifested in external relations. These latter arise in actual life and are determined by social conditions. But the former are in essence what they have ever been. The cardinal virtues are still conditions which must be fulfilled in every good life. It is still necessary to exercise self-control, to brave danger and difficulty, to seek to understand the situations in which we are placed, to fulfil the requirements of our place in life. In these necessities we see the justification of the cardinal virtues. The list is still suggestive, though modern meanings must be assigned to the ancient terms.

(c) *Temperance*.—Temperance must be extended from control of appetite to complete self-mastery. Not only sensuous impulses are to be restrained, but every system of desire which conflicts with a higher system. In short, self-control must be also self-regulation. It is important to insist on this, as in the popular thought and speech of the day temperance is identified with abstinence, that is, self-control is declared impossible, and self-denial is substituted. Doubtless temperance takes the form of abstinence when any particular appetite is recognized to be so strong that every gratification of it is dangerous to the moral life. But the true function of temperance is not to negate any form of personal life, but to bring all into harmony with the highest purpose of that life.

(d) *Courage*.—In modern times the call for courage in the individual life is most frequently to brave dangers and to face difficulties of an intellectual or moral character. Ridicule, contempt, and intellectual attacks on our most cherished beliefs, have taken the place of the thumbscrew and the stake. The call to face physical danger is occasional, but the courage of the soldier is in no danger of being overlooked. Though, as Plato pointed out, this is "a gift of nature rather than of reason," yet it can be developed.

A man who keenly realizes the pain and danger he is called upon to face may train himself to brave them. The only fear he knows is the fear of being afraid. It is this courage of deliberate purpose which has moral excellence; and it is the same in kind whatever be the origin of the natural fear which courage has to overcome. The courageous man fearlessly pursues what he judges right in spite of obstacles of every kind.

(e) *Wisdom*.—In the Platonic scheme wisdom was the highest good realizable by man. Modern thought finds the perfection of human nature in the activity of the whole personality, and not simply in that of the intellect. But it recognizes that intellectual cultivation is intrinsically valuable.

Moreover, intelligence has great instrumental value for morality. It has been seen how important is insight to supplement good intentions. A well-meaning fool may do much harm without intending it. A perfectly right act is necessarily a wise act.¹ Insight implies both prudence in anticipating and seeking consequences, and apprehension of our own powers and motives. Nothing is easier than self-deception, and nothing is more insidiously disastrous to the moral life. Plato held the "lie in the soul" to be worse than the lie told to others.² When we consider its wide-spreading consequences and the pollution of the springs of action it implies we see much justification for his opinion. Moreover, truth to others is always liable to be vitiated by self-deception:

"This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."³

As insight is required in every voluntary act, wisdom is a universal characteristic of virtue. Insight shows when

¹ Cf. pp. 129, 138-139. ² See *Rep.* ii. 382.

³ Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, Act i., Sc. 3.

passions need to be checked; insight makes evident what dangers and difficulties must be braved; insight estimates the probability that the proposed means will realize the desired end; above all, insight is of the very essence of true valuation. All virtue combines insight with love of the good.

(*f*) *Justice*.—The social virtues are represented in Plato's scheme by justice. This is too narrow to cover all the complex relations of modern life. The essence of justice is regard for the rights of others. Plato reached the position that injury to another is in no case just, and he explained that injury is whatever makes him a worse man. This, of course, admits penal justice, the aim of which is to improve men both individually and in communities.

The Christian precept "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you" goes far beyond this. It is positive, while the Platonic conception is negative. It enlarges justice into benevolence. The principle that each person should love his neighbour as himself implies that he should do to others all the good in his power. This demands no equality of treatment. Rather, it requires that each should cherish and do good to others in proportion to their nearness to himself. For nearness of relation means opportunity.

The Platonic principle that to do good to a man is to improve him as a man still needs to be emphasized. The modern tendency is materialistic. It seeks to better the external conditions of life, and it assumes that such improvement will make men worthier. But there is nothing necessarily conducive to higher morality in improved dwellings, better planned towns, increased leisure, freer access to the means of instruction. All such things are in themselves morally neutral. Their value is instrumental. If rightly used they are conditions favourable to right conduct, but without the will to do well they may encourage the tendency to find the good of life in bodily enjoyment. So all effort to make men better must attempt, through example, precept,

and encouragement, to evoke the will of the individual to seek righteousness.

The conception that justice involves the fulfilment of the duties of one's station has also application in modern life. With Plato social justice was secured when rulers, soldiers, and industrial workers, played as groups their appropriate parts in the State. Modern thought lays emphasis on the fact that, whatever his vocation, each individual is a complete human being and has many functions to fulfil besides those of his calling. Popular thought realizes that in these relations each man should be virtuous, but it holds too loosely to the doctrine that in his profession or calling also virtue requires that he should do his best. Virtue is realized in all the relations of life, and of these the vocational are not the least important.

(iii) THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES.—Plato regarded wisdom as the unifying principle of life. Modern thought seeks it in the whole personality directed towards the realization of good. This implies that the good is something other and greater than the personalities in which it is partially realized. Hence, to seek the good implies faith in its reality, and hope, or confidence that no honest and well-directed effort will be fruitless. And the great moving-power of personality is love.

Thus, the 'theological virtues,' as they are called—*Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*—are not an additional class of virtues, but aspects of all virtue. As Archbishop D'Arcy says: "Each of them may, in turn, be made to include the whole of a virtuous life. Their true meaning is to be sought in the way in which each of them throws some special light upon the life of virtue. One regards virtue as the outcome of conviction, another as having reference to a great future, the third as being the character which finds its good in the good of others."¹

¹ *A Short Study of Ethics*, pp. 178-179.

4. **Relation of Morality and Religion.**

(i) **IN THEORY.**—This leads to the relation between morality and religion. Faith, hope, and love, look towards a perfect goodness which transcends human goodness but is of one nature with it, and so supplies its measure. All moral judgement has reference to such a standard. We can speak of goodness or personality as imperfect only because we can compare each with a standard or ideal. These must be either figments of the imagination or realities. If they are personal fancies they express merely individual tastes, and on that foundation no general doctrine of ethics can be erected. But the acceptance of them as real is religion. So religion is the ultimate ground of morality.

Ethics assumes that the spiritual is higher than the material, and that the service of others is nobler than selfishness. The justification of these assumptions, too, is found in the conception of the world as essentially spiritual, as being a manifestation of the divine nature whose essence is love.

This does not mean that ethics is a branch of theology. Ethics investigates the facts of moral experience, as physical science studies the facts of the material world. Each rests on assumptions which lie beyond its province. Physical science leaves on one side the underlying metaphysical question as to the ultimate nature of matter. It accepts the facts of experience as facts, and limits itself to investigating their relations to each other. Similarly, ethics deals with the facts which fall within its province. If further questions be raised as to the ultimate meaning of those facts, the answer must be sought in the metaphysics, not of existence only, but of value. This latter is theology. Ethics has the same kind of independence, and the same kind of relation to the philosophy which deals with ultimate problems, as have the physical sciences.

(ii) **IN PRACTICE.**—In the individual life, too, morality is perfected in religion. For while moral progress is the con-

tinuous pursuit of an ideal which recedes as one advances and is never attained, in religion the soul is surrendered to God and is permeated by the Divine life. "Oneness of mind with the Divine mind and will is not the future hope, and aim of religion, but its very beginning and birth in the soul. . . . It is true, indeed, that the religious life is progressive: but understood in the light of the foregoing idea, religious progress is not progress *towards*, but *within*, the sphere of the infinite."¹

Thus religion gives depth and meaning and warmth to morality, and offers a solution of its problems. Faith, hope, and love, fixed on a personal God, and made the means of conscious union with Him, give the final answer to the question, Why should I try to live a good life?

¹ J. Caird: *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 283, 284.

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